Psychological Studies in Lutheranism

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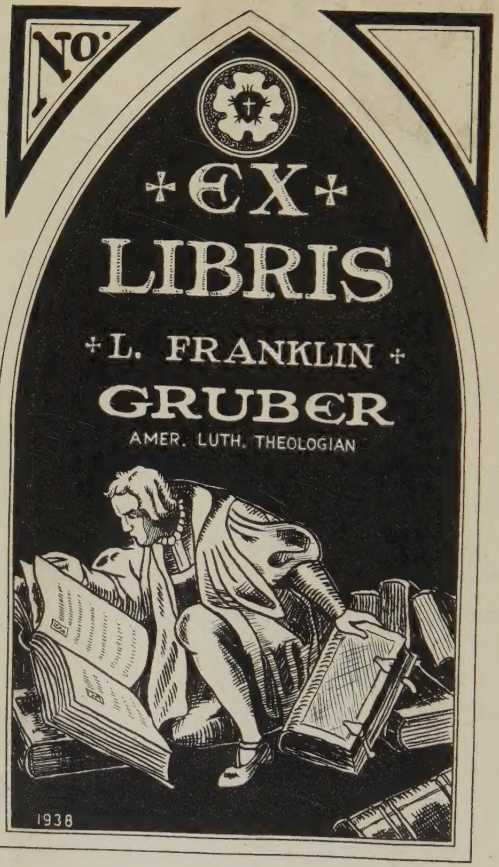
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To
The Rev. L. Franklin Gruber, D.D.,
With the cordial greetings
of the author —
P. St. Heisey.
Nov. 19-1918
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Psychological Studies in Lutheranism

PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDIES IN LUTHERANISM

By

PAUL HAROLD HEISEY, M. A.

Introduction by

THE REV. PROFESSOR J. A. CLUTZ, D. D.

Professor of Practical Theology
in The Lutheran Theological Seminary,
Gettysburg, Pa.

1916

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TO

My Godly Parents

Whose lives of devotion and sacrifice
have been an inspiration to
a grateful son

PREFACE

THE essays which are included in this volume are intended chiefly to be suggestive in awakening an interest among pastors, catechists, and teachers in the application of psychology to the phenomena of religion, to the end that religious work will be more efficient.

Chapter II was prepared as a thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts at the State University of Iowa. It was written under the guidance of Professor Edwin D. Starbuck, Ph. D., to whom the author owes the impulse to engage in studies along the line of these essays.

Chapters I, II, and III have appeared in the *Lutheran Quarterly* and are reprinted here through the courtesy of the editors, Drs. Singmaster, Clutz, and Gotwald. Chapter IV has appeared in the *Lutheran Church Review* and is included in this volume through the kindness of the editor, the Rev. T. E. Schmauk, D. D., LL.D. To these editors I wish to express my thanks.

I also wish to express my gratitude to Professor J. A. Clutz, D. D., for preparing the "Introduction" and for his constant encouragement.

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INTRODUCTION

By Rev. Jacob A. Clutz, D. D.,

Professor of Practical Theology in the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Pa.

MR. Heisey has asked me to write a brief Introduction to his volume on *Psychological Studies in Lutheranism.* It is with no small pleasure that I comply with his request.

My acquaintance with Mr. Heisey began in the autumn of 1903 when he came from his home in Lancaster, Pa., to enter Midland College, Atchison, Kansas, to prepare for the Lutheran ministry. Though I resigned the presidency of Midland College a few months later and removed to the East, I had become interested in the earnest young student and have followed his career ever since with interest. By correspondence, and in various other ways, I have also kept in touch with him and his work, both as a student and as a pastor.

As a student Mr. Heisey was always faithful and diligent. During his college course he was especially interested in the literary work and in public speaking. Early in the course he prepared several illustrated lectures which he delivered be-

fore Young People's Societies and in many churches. These lectures received much favorable comment from pastors and others, especially one on Martin Luther and the Reformation.

Mr. Heisey graduated from Midland College in 1907 with the degree of A. B., and from the Western Theological Seminary of the General Synod Lutheran Church, also located at Atchison, in 1910. His first charge was at North Liberty, Iowa, where he served as pastor of the Lutheran church from 1910 to 1914. As North Liberty was not far from Iowa City, the seat of the Iowa State University, and his pastoral duties were not very exacting, Mr. Heisey at once entered on a course of study at the State University, from which he received the Master's degree in 1911. He continued as a graduate student in the university from 1912 to 1915, his chief subjects being Philosophy and Psychology. He has also given much attention to the subject of Religious Education and expects to make this a specialty in the future.

In connection with his studies in the university Mr. Heisey became deeply interested in the Psychology of Religion and gave much attention to it. At that time this was still a comparatively new subject, at least as a separate course. One of the first to apply the study of Psychology definitely to subjects connected with religious experience was Professor J. H. Leuba, who published an article on *The Psychology of Religious Phenomena* in *The American Journal of Psychology* in 1896. Profes-

sor Leuba has since become one of the recognized authorities on the subject.

However, Professor E. D. Starbuck had then already been at work for a considerable time along similar lines. As early as 1890 he had read a paper before the College Association of Indiana in which the suggestion was made that the phenomena connected with religious experience might be studied and classified scientifically just as any other activities of the mind or spirit such as had been usually considered under Psychology. Finally, in 1899, he published his book, *The Psychology of Religion,* and thus blazed the way for a new development of thought.

I understand that Professor Starbuck has since recognized the fact that the title of this volume was somewhat of a misnomer, as the most that its contents would have justified would have been *The Psychology of Conversion.* But it was a beginning, and in this sense at least it was an epoch-making book. It called attention to the subject, aroused great interest in it, and set many others to working along the same or similar lines. The result has been an ever growing series of volumes on this general subject coming from many different authors, both in this country and abroad. Some of the more important of these are mentioned by Mr. Heisey in his first chapter on *The Psychological Study of Religion.*

Opinion may still be divided as to the ultimate value of this new application of modern Psychol-

ogy, or concerning its effect on Christian experience and life, or even on Christianity itself. If, as seems to be the tendency with some writers, the object is to explain all the phenomena of religion, even those connected with the Christian religion, in a purely naturalistic way so as to exclude all supernatural elements and to make all religion, including Christianity, a mere natural phenomenon of a mechanical evolution or development, it may prove to be a curse rather than a blessing, a distinct hindrance rather than a help in Christian experience and life.

But this is not a necessary result of subsuming religious phenomena under Psychology. Many writers on the subject do not call in question the supernatural origin of Christianity, or the supernatural elements in a Christian experience, such as conversion, or the conquest of sin, or growth in holiness. Quite to the contrary, they find a definite place for the contact of the divine and the human, and for the entrance of divine power into human experience and human life. The only effort of these writers is to put all these phenomena on a scientific basis, and to explain them in a rational way, as far as this may be possible. In this there may be great good.

It is perhaps too soon, as yet, to say or even to see, what the final outcome may be. But, certainly, much light has been thrown already on many of the phenomena of the Christian experience, especially such as temptation, repentance, conversion,

faith, hope, etc. Very valuable help has thus been given to pastors and Sunday School teachers and to all others who are engaged in religious instruction and culture. The study of this subject must be especially helpful to all who have anything to do with the religious education and training of the young. That this is generally recognized by educators is seen in the place which has been given to it already in the curriculums of most theological seminaries, and in the various courses of study prepared for the use of Sunday School Teachers' Training Classes.

The chief interest, however, in this book by Mr. Heisey lies in the fact that it is the first formal and extended attempt, so far as I know, to apply the Psychology of Religion to the interpretation of the Christian experience and life of a particular denomination, as indicated in the title, *Psychological Studies in Lutheranism.*

Of course the germs of this use of the new subject have been present from the beginning, and there has been a gradual and growing tendency in this direction that has prepared the way for such a volume. In the very first book on the subject, by Professor Starbuck, there is the recognition of a marked difference in the Christian experiences of different persons. Especially is this the case in conversion, the experience to which Professor Starbuck largely confines his discussion. A broad and distinct line of demarkation is traced between those who enter on the Christian life by a crisis experi-

ence that is often cyclonic in its intensity, and those who gradually grow into a clear consciousness of their saved relation to God through faith in Jesus Christ. The former can, of course, ever afterward point to the exact time and place at which they "first saw the Lord." The latter may never know just when or where they crossed the line and became the true children of God. Or, they may testify, as many have done, that they never knew a time when they did not love God and Jesus Christ and call them Father and Saviour. Moreover, this difference in experience is there traced to differences in mental constitution, and in education and environment, which naturally manifest themselves not only in conversion but also in the entire religious experience.

These same facts are developed still further and more clearly stated and emphasized in Professor James' great book on *The Varieties of Religious Experience.* The very title of this volume, which contains the Gifford Lectures delivered by Professor James before the University of Edinburgh in 1901-1902, suggests the fact that not all can expect, or be expected, to have precisely the same experience. How natural, therefore, that those whose experience is similar should be drawn together by mutual sympathy and a common understanding, and in this fact we have the natural basis for the different denominations. Professor James frequently refers, in his discussion, to the psychological differences between the Catholics and Pro-

testants in explanation of the differences in their beliefs and forms of worship, and in their attitudes toward the truth and the Church. He also suggests this as one explanation of the differences between some of the leading Protestant bodies. He even refers to the psychological peculiarities of Luther, and Calvin, and Wesley, and Jonathan Edwards, and others, in explanation of their peculiar religious views and experiences, though he does not develop these suggestions very far.

Then, still a little later, in a volume by the Reverend George Barton Cutten, D. D., on *The Psychological Phenomena of Christianity,* published in 1908, we find a separate chapter on *Denominationalism.* In this the position is taken that "men are psychologically so constituted that different things appeal to different persons, and religiously these things are represented by different denominations." In answer to the question, "Cannot men be sufficiently loyal to Jesus Christ to give up their petty differences?", a question we often hear asked in effect even if not in just these words, Dr. Cutten continues very truly and very wisely: "They are so loyal to Jesus that they will not surrender what to them is truth. Are the citizens of this country less patriotic because they are divided into numerous political parties? They express their patriotism by espousing those principles, the adoption of which they believe would assist in the country's prosperity. Denominations are a necessity and will continue to be, so long as men's minds operate

as they do now. And these differences show God's handiwork as plainly as the planets in the heavens which shine with different brilliancy, travel in different orbits, and attract different satellites."

Mr. Heisey is simply following this lead when he now undertakes in this volume to present a study, from the standpoint of Psychology, of some of the peculiarities of the great Lutheran Church to which he belongs, and of Martin Luther, the great Reformer, to whom under God the Lutheran Church owes its origin and its name, as well as many of its characteristics in doctrine and life. The work may be somewhat fragmentary and incomplete, as all such pioneer work is apt to be almost of necessity. But it is a very interesting and promising beginning. I have no doubt that it will be followed in due time by more elaborate studies of the same character, either by the same author, or by others, very likely by both.

Not only so, but it will in all probability suggest similar studies of the other great denominations, and eventually comparative studies of the different denominations. And who knows but that such studies may prove by and by to be an important step towards a better understanding between the several denominations of Christians and a more fraternal relation and cooperation.

I have little hope that denominationalism will ever entirely disappear from the Christian Church, just because of this psychological basis for them. Neither am I sure that it would be desirable that

it should. Each denomination, certainly each of the great historic denominations, has stood and still stands for the defense and development of some special doctrine or phase of Christian experience and life, and in this way the faith, and life, and experience of the Church as a whole, have been greatly enlarged and enriched. I entirely agree, therefore, with Dr. Cutten when he says, at the close of his chapter on *Denominationalism:* "On account of the psychological differences in people, there is no likelihood of denominationalism being entirely eliminated. The doctrines of different denominations may appear to be almost or quite contradictory, and these denominations can never agree to abandon either or both doctrines, and if they should, Christianity would suffer a distinct loss rather than a gain."

But just because of this it seems to me that the several denominations must have an increased respect for each other, and a greater spirit of charity and tolerance if, by a study of the psychological reasons for their existence, they can be brought to a better understanding of each other and to see that their differences are not the result of mere wilfullness and stubbornness, but that they are based on the very nature of things, and especially on the nature of the people themselves, that they are but the outgrowth and expression of the "varieties of religious experience" that are natural and unavoidable because of the "varieties" of the people who have these experiences. Then these different de-

nominations will be more ready also to work together harmoniously for the righting of wrongs, for the overthrow of evil, for the defeat of error, for the triumph of truth and righteousness, and for the coming of the Kingdom of God and of His Son, Jesus Christ. If such a time should ever come, I believe that then our Lord's prayer for His disciples that "they all may be one," will be answered more truly and more fully than it ever could be by any organic union that would combine all the denominations into one great all-inclusive Church.

It is just because I believe that they will contribute to this end that I welcome and commend Mr. Heisey's book, and all similar studies of the psychology of Lutheranism, or of any of the other great bodies of Christ's disciples.

Gettysburg, Pa.,
March 27th, 1916.

The Psychological Study of Religion

CHAPTER I

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY OF RELIGION

THE growth of the science and study of psychology has been phenomenal in recent years. It may be said that "it began with an analysis of simple ideas and feelings, and it has developed to an insight into the mechanism of the highest acts and emotions, thoughts and creations. It started by studying the mental life of the individual, and it has rushed forward to the physical organization of society, to social psychology, to the psychology of art and science, religion and language, history and law."[1] The application of psychology and the methods of science to religion is of recent date.

Much that had been done in the fields of anthropology, history of religion, and the philosophy of religion borders on that which has come to be distinctively known as the psychology of religion. The first work attempted in the field of the psychology of religion as a distinctive study was that by Professor E. D. Starbuck, Ph.D. While a stu-

1 Muensterberg, Psychology and Life, p. 2.

dent in college (1886-1890) he was very much interested in the study of Comparative Religion. While teaching at Vincennes College (1891-1893) he read Max Mueller's volume on "Science of Religion," which gave him a fresh impulse in the study of religion and also crystallized his own longings after the possibility of applying empirical methods to the study of religion. Resigning his position he entered Harvard University in 1893 to pursue studies related to his chosen field of inquiry. On arriving at Harvard he issued two questionnaires, one on "Conversion," and the other on "The Line of Growth in Religious Experience," not attended by conversion. Previous to this, in 1890, Professor Starbuck read a paper before the Indiana College Association, which was his "first crystallization of vague ideas which had been forming, that religion might be studied in the more careful ways we call scientific, with profit to both science and religion." The psychology of religion as a field of investigation was soon taken up by the faculty and students of Clark University.[2] This school had paid much attention to the study of adolescence and this study brought forth many interesting facts relating to the religious experiences of adolescents. As early as 1882, Dr. G. Stanley Hall contributed a paper to the *Princeton Review* entitled "The Moral and Religious Training of Children," which opened the way for more extensive studies along the same line.

2 For a sketch of the history of this science see "The Psychology of Religion," by James B. Pratt, Harvard Theological Review, Vol. I, No. 4, p. 435.

Mr. William H. Burnham and Arthur H. Daniels made investigations which were of a nature of the psychology of religion although leaning toward anthropology and adolescent psychology. In 1896 Professor James H. Leuba published a paper on "The Psychology of Religious Phenomena" in which he dealt chiefly with the conversion experience. This was followed by the work of Mr. E. G. Lancaster, and later the published work of Professor Starbuck entitled "The Psychology of Religion." This latter was the first large publication bearing upon this new field of study. The author himself admits that the title was a misnomer, since the volume dealt with only a few of the problems of the new-born science and was in no sense a complete survey or treatment of the subject, which it could not have been at that early stage of development. This work has remained as one of the two or three great contributions to the science of the psychology of religion. The sub-title of the work by Dr. Starbuck is "an empirical study of the religious consciousness." Other early studies in this field were those of Professor George A. Coe which bore the title "The Spiritual Life: Studies in the Science of Religion," and the studies of Luther H. Gulick on "Age, Sex, and Conversion." It is striking to know that though Professors Coe and Starbuck worked independently they arrived at very much the same conclusion in reference to the religious awakening of adolescents and also in reference to the conversion experience.

Probably the next great contribution to this field which should be mentioned is Professor William James' volume on "Varieties of Religious Experience." This entered a larger field than the psychology of the religious consciousness and involved the philosophical side of religion in that it sought the ultimate significance of the facts upon the problems of religion. Other studies which should be mentioned in the development of the science of the psychology of religion are Davenport's "Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals," Pratt's "The Psychology of Religious Belief," Stratton's "The Psychology of the Religious Life," Ames' "The Psychology of Religious Experience," Lueba's "A Psychological Study of Religion," King's "The Development of Religion," and Warner's "The Psychology of the Christian Life." Though we have not mentioned all of the contributions to this field of study, the above sketch points out the chief studies and the main lines of the development of the science.

The very nature of religion warrants a psychological study of it. "Religious experience is made up of the same elements as the rest of the conscious life, and these elements are connected and elaborated according to laws holding for mental life generally." From the standpoint of psychology, religion is a "mass of ascertainable states of consciousness." Thus, the psychology of religion can be looked upon as a branch of psychology dealing with the religious consciousness only, or that part

of consciousness which is concerned with that which we term religion, and the activities connected with it. The psychology of religion is the search for law, for uniformities among religious phenomena. In the thought of Professor Coe, the search is one to determine "under what circumstances does the Divine Spirit work such or such a change in the minds of men?"[3] This is in harmony with the starting point or ideal of the psychology of religion as a science: "There is no event in the spiritual life which does not occur in accordance with immutable laws." This does not imply that man will discover all these laws, or having discovered them will be able to determine their full significance. In any sphere a law is an abstract thing and in the field of religion as in other fields we can determine many things that will be of concrete value though not obtaining all abstract law in the particular field. "The end of our study is not to resolve the mystery of religion, but to bring enough of it into orderliness that its facts may appeal to our understanding."

It might be argued that such a study of the religious life would "drag it down" or destroy its majesty. But surely botany has not dragged down the beauty of the flower nor has astronomy destroyed the majesty of the heavens. The discovery of law and uniformity exalts the object in which it is found. Every new discovery is a new bit of knowledge of God. Every new law is a new evi-

3 George A. Coe: The Spiritual Life, p. 17.

dence of God. "All's law, but all's God." George Stevens writes in his "Psychology of the Christian Soul:" "The spiritual process is God working through the minds of men." The scientist in any field does not concern himself with the ultimate origin of things but with facts concerning it as observed in life and his task is the interpretation of these facts. So, "the explanations of religion which the psychologist and the sociologist can give leave unanswered, of course, the question of ultimate origin."

Whether or not we can speak of a science of the psychology of religion is a debatable question. It is perfectly clear that as yet we have no well developed science of the psychology of religion. Whether we can have is yet to be seen. This question hinges somewhat upon our definition of a science and our conception of scientific law. As yet we have very little in the way of generalized truths from the study of the psychology of religion and yet the psychology of religion presupposes that there is law in the spiritual realm as in the natural realm. When these laws, or some of them, are discovered we shall approach a science, until then the psychology of religion will concern itself with discovering the facts of the religious life and consciousness, describing them, classifying them, and attempting to explain them. The charge might be brought that science should not invade the inner chambers of the soul and search for laws there, but science has faced objections in every step of its pro-

gress until now it has come to invade the most sacred precincts. It has left religion for its final and supreme task.

There is somewhat of general agreement as to the field of the psychology of religion although not all investigators have conceived of the work and the scope of it in exactly the same way. Some have placed the emphasis upon the rise and development of religion in the race, while others have placed the emphasis upon the study of the religious consciousness of the individual. Others have taken both views into account.

"The business of the psychology of religion," according to Professor Starbuck, "is to bring together a systematized body of evidence which shall make it possible to comprehend new regions in the spiritual life of man, and to read old dogmas in larger and fresher light."[4]

According to Professor Ames: "The psychologist of religion accepts the facts of religion, the temples and priests, the sacred books and ceremonies, the faiths and the customs which exist in such profusion throughout the world. He seeks to know the needs, impulses, and desires from which these institutions and activities arise. He inquires concerning the circumstances under which they appear in the race and the individual. He attempts to trace their development into settled institutions, doctrines, and emotions. He marks the part they

4 Starbuck: The Psychology of Religion, p. 6.

play, the function they perform in the experience of the individual and of society."[5] For Professor Pratt, the work of the psychologist of religion is "to describe the workings of the human mind, as far as they are influenced by its attitude toward the Determiner of Destiny."[6]

The specific work of the psychology of the Christian life is indicated by Dr. Warner in these words: "Christian psychology is the study of the soul in its exhibition of the phenomena of the Christian life. It is the systematic, scientific knowledge of psychical activities involved in Christian experience and their co-ordinations in conduct and character. It is the exploration of the entire field of inter-related phenomena appearing in the life of the Christian. It is the classification of all the facts thus discoverable in their correlated order. It is the formulation of the evident laws of the spiritual, experimental action developed under the Gospel of Jesus Christ."[7]

These definitions indicate the various phases of the work, the distinctively psychological, both the individual and social; and the anthropological and sociological.

In the past much of the study of the psychology of religion has been devoted to investigations of the conversion experience. Professor Starbuck's book considers conversion, lines of growth not in-

5 Ames: The Psychology of Religious Experience, p. 13.
6 Pratt: The Psychology of Religion, in The Journal of Religious Psychology, Vol. 5, No. 4, p. 383.
7 Warner: The Psychology of the Christian Life, p. 33.

cluding conversion, and a comparison of the lines of growth with and without conversion. But the field is much larger and studies have been made of faith, prayer, revelations, religious states and religious practices. The chief problems of the psychology of religion have been classified by Professor James H. Leuba under four heads: "(1) The impulses, motives and aims; (2) the means employed to reach the ends—ceremonial, prayer, communion, etc.; (3) the results secured; (4) the means and the results considered in relation of cause and effect."[8] Again, the field of the psychology of religion might be further indicated by these additional subjects: the determination of "what is religion?" types of belief, mysticism, storm and stress in adolescence, habit and conversion, the meaning of regeneration, the meaning of sanctification, a study of the religious instinct, religion as a harmonizing instinct, religion as a stimulus to life, religion and conduct, temperament in religion, the meaning of religion in personal and social life.

Chiefly the empirical method is being used in the psychology of religion. The earliest investigators adopted the questionnaire method which since then has been used extensively in this field of inquiry, though discountenanced at the present time as not being very scientific and as not getting at the facts in the best manner. In gathering data use has been made of autobiographies, biographies, letters, spontaneous expressions, history, anthro-

8 Leuba: A Psychological Study of Religion.

pology, and informal discussions. The older methods have been supplanted by the analytical and the experimental.

We need not fear this invasion of science into religion, for assuming that we live in a world of order we cannot conclude other than that law operates in the spiritual realm and in the religious consciousness as in the rest of life. The psychology of religion does not imply the elimination of the supernatural from religion and the religious life unless the evidence of law in nature is the ground for eliminatng the supernatural from the natural. Contending that such dread is needless, Dr. Warner writes: "Scrutiny can change no fact. Truths are the same in the shadow or in the sunlight. Realities are invulnerable and unchangeable to whatever process subjected. The constituent elements of the life we call Christian are substantial, real, unalterable. They are the eternal verities of the life begotten of God in the soul. No possible handling can render them less real or change their essential nature. The dread of their scrutiny is a confession either of our inability to demonstrate their substantial nature or of our imperfect faith in their indestructible reality. All such dread is without adequate reason and actually groundless."[9]

We can anticipate most wholesome results from this study of religion from the psychological standpoint, not only for science but especially for re-

9 Warner, op cit., p. 32.

ligion itself, for from the viewpoint of the pastor and religious worker the psychology of religion exists for religion and not religion for psychology. Very suggestive are the words of Professor James in his introduction to Professor Starbuck's book: "Rightly interpreted, the whole tendency of Dr. Starbuck's patient labor is to bring compromise and conciliation into the long standing feud of Science and Religion."

The service of the psychology of religion to religion is indicated in the words of Professor Leuba: "Religion needs as much as any other practical activity the kind of purification and guidance that science provides. It needs in particular the insight into the dynamics of conscious life which can be contributed, not by studies in comparative religion nor by criticism of sacred texts, but only by psychology."

The psychology of religion should lend information as to the origin and solution of such problems of the Christian Church as: the decay of the revival, alienation from the church of whole classes of the population, the excess of women over men in church life, the apparent powerlessness of organized religion to suppress or seriously check the great organized vices and injustices of society, the failure of the Sunday School to accomplish more definite results in the dissemination of Bible knowledge.[10]

10 Suggested by Coe in his "Spiritual Life."

The psychology of religion will aid in applying the great truths of the Bible to life. Professor Bowne has suggested that "a great many things may be theologically true which are not psychologically true." "We may express and explain the experience in terms of doctrine, and in doing so we may have the truth; nevertheless, the doctrine is not a fact of consciousness, but a theory about the fact."[11] The great Bible doctrines must be interpreted in the light of human nature, and their application must be adapted to each individual. "Conversion" may be definitely stated as a theological formula but its meaning in experience varies with individuals. The psychology of religion ought to aid in a true interpretation of these fundamental conceptions of religion.

The study of the abnormal and the pathological in religion—for there are such instances—ought to lead to principles applicable in the securing of the normal in religious experience just as the study of physical disease has aided mankind to take precautionary steps to conserve health and the study of insanity has lead to information concerning the laws of mental health.

There are many practical results that should follow from the study of the psychology of religion that are of special value to the minister of the Gospel or the teacher of religion. Such a study ought to "increase our power of appreciation of spiritual

11 Bowne: Studies in Christianity, p. 199.

things," as a scientific study of the flowers, the rocks, the stars increases appreciation of them. Such a study ought to strengthen the faith of the religious man for he sees the reality of religion for life, and is convinced above all else that man is a "religious being" and that he has religious needs that must be met.

The study of the psychology of religion should lead and is leading to greater wisdom in religious education. A recent inquiry of the Student Department of the Young Men's Christian Association shows that forty-five colleges offer required courses in Religious Education and that eighty have elective courses in it. These courses profess to be based largely upon a supposed knowledge of the psychology of religion and of child study. This study would give us sound pedagogical principles. "The service of psychology to practical religion is to make possible a harvest of wiser means in moral and religious culture, and also to lift religion sufficiently out of the domain of feeling to make an appeal to the understanding."

The study of the psychology of religion convinces one that there are different lines of religious development and growth. To be convinced of this leads one to adopt methods of work to meet the needs and conditions of each individual. One great danger in the work of a religious teacher is to make "his experience a standard by which to judge and guide the experience of others." This has led to many mistakes in religious nurture and culture.

To demand that each should "come to the Lord" by the same road and through the same experience is unscientific, untrue to nature. This also suggests that there are stages of spiritual growth from childhood to maturity and the religious appeal and the spiritual food should be adapted to each stage. This study ought to equip the religious worker to realize "the importance of wisely anticipating the stages of growth and leading on naturally and easily from one stage to another." It will aid him to meet doubt, hesitation, and objection in a wise manner. It will add to his zeal knowledge, for neither zeal without knowledge nor knowledge without zeal will suffice.

Especially should a science such as the psychology of religion be of worth and value to the religious leader in the Lutheran Church which has always laid strong emphasis upon the religious training and the education of her children and youth, and upon methods that are now receiving the commendation of modern scientific thought. Lutheran pastors have had their attention called to, and their interest awakened in the relations of psychology to their work by the words of Dr. G. H. Gerberding in his volume "The Lutheran Catechist," especially in Chapter III, "The Catechist's Study of the Catechumen" and in Chapter XII, "The Catechist's Qualifications." In the latter chapter he writes: "The good catechist must know human nature. He needs to be a psychologist; to know not only general psychology, but even more

does he need to know child-psychology..... This is very important and helpful for the understanding of the mental makeup, the mental activity and the mental development of child-nature..... He will find much that will help him in his catechising." We add, that the psychology of religion has the same bearing and important relation to the pastor's work as Dr. Gerberding ascribes to child-psychology.

More recently, the attention of Lutheran pastors has been directed to this study by the Rev. Prof. Luther A. Weigle, Ph. D., who has placed emphasis upon this field of study in his volume, "The Pupil and the Teacher," (Book Two of the Lutheran Teacher Training Series) in which he acknowledges his indebtedness to such writers as Hall, James, and Coe, quoting directly from the latter's distinctively psychological treatise on religion, "The Spiritual Life."

Still more recently the Rev. Prof. Leander S. Keyser, D. D., has called the attention of Lutheran pastors to the relation of psychology to their work, in his volume, "A System of Christian Ethics." He has done some psychologizing in the field of religion touching upon "conversion," and "the unfolding life of the regenerated child."

The Lutheran method of catechization and confirmation offers a fruitful field for investigation and an excellent opportunity for the application of the approved methods of religious nurture.

Granting that religion is the highest concern of

life; that the human soul is man's greatest possession, and its culture the greatest task assigned to man; it behooves the Lutheran minister in his three-fold capacity of preacher, pastor, and catechist, to avail himself of the latest results of any science that will make him more efficient in the discharge of his duties, in the feeding of souls that are hungering and thirsting for righteousness.

A Study in the Mysticism of Luther

CHAPTER II

A STUDY IN THE MYSTICISM OF LUTHER

I. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MYSTICAL ELEMENT IN LUTHER.

ANY and varied influences converge in the religious experience of Luther. It is in his early training that we must seek the roots and the beginnings of his religious life. Both the family and the community life of mediaeval times were distinctively religious. Luther's parents, Hans and Margaret Luther, were of a deeply religious nature, and early devoted attention to the religious training of their son. There was much in the religious thought of the times that was primitive and crass, but the religion in general has been characterized as "simple, unaffected, and evangelical."

By heredity, Luther was of a religious turn of mind, and grew up in a religious atmosphere. Luther's father had a great reverence for the Church and religion. It is reported that upon one occasion friends found Luther's father engaged in prayer while bending over the child Martin in the

cradle. Luther's mother was even more religious and devout than his father. She constantly had in mind the religious training of the child. She early taught him to pray. Luther's first religious instruction included the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer. This instruction had a life-long influence upon him, and he has handed down to posterity explanations of these norms of religious instruction which are used to this day. The religious life of his mother, common to the times was marked by superstitions and fears. She is described as having been "imaginative, and sensitive, the prey of all kinds of conflicting emotions." Upon one occasion she thought that herself and children were bewitched. These early impressions lingered long in the life of Luther.

The temperamental traits of the mother are seen in Luther. He was at all times sensitive to religious influences and impressions. "He was a dreamy, contemplative child; and the unseen world was never out of his thoughts."[1]

Early in life Luther was sent to the community school, and his instruction included a study of the Psalter, and classical religious hymns. Religious exercises played an important part in the daily program of the school.

An early mystical influence that entered into Luther's experience was the instruction he received while attending school at Magdeburg, in 1497, when

1 Lindsay: The Reformation.

fourteen years of age. The school was conducted by members of the "Noll Brothers." This society was associated with the mystical organization known as the "Brethren of the Common Life." The teachings and the views of this organization have been termed the "new mysticism."[2]

When one considers the life and work of Luther, he can see how they conformed to the ideals of this "new mysticism," the roots of which were planted in the young mind while at school at Magdeburg. The writings of members of this group had a great influence upon Luther in his later studies.

After spending a year at Magdeburg, Luther was sent to Eisenach for the furthering of his education. At the school of St. George's Church he proved to be a good student. In addition to the excellent instruction he received at this school, two strong influences entered into his life; the parental attention and religious instruction he received in the Cotta home, and also the presence of the order of the Franciscans in the city.

In 1501, Luther entered the University of Erfurt. As a preparation for law studies he was trained in Philosophy. The works of Aristotle were the chief text-books. The influence of the mystical element in this classical philosopher is seen in Luther's discussion of the topic of *Christ as the Word of God.* In this he enters into a philosophical discussion maintaining "the unity of essence be-

2 For a characterization of this organization see Jones' "Studies in Mystical Religion."

tween the Father and the Son, together with their difference in person." In this discussion Luther availed himself of the philosophy of Aristotle with which he was acquainted.

In Erfurt, Luther also studied the works of D'Ailly, Gerson, Biel and Occam. All these authors strengthened the mystical element in Luther. Luther held Gerson in high esteem and looked upon him as one who had attained a true understanding of the Gospel. He commends the writings of Gerson because they dealt with spiritual temptations as apart from those of the flesh. He places Gerson even above St. Augustine in this matter.

William of Occam was Luther's favorite scholastic. Occam, together with Biel and D'Ailly were the exponents of nominalism, and this philosophy appealed to Luther. Dr. Jacobs writes: "To Luther the mystical side of nominalism was attractive; since it taught that, as subjects can be known only individually, all other truth must be remitted to the domain of faith."[3] The teachings of nominalism when applied to the Church emphasized the individual Church above the Papacy. Both Occam and D'Ailly had spoken against the authority of Rome. The influence of these teachers and this philosophy—especially its mystical tendency—upon Luther is seen later in his attitude toward the supremacy of Rome.

As a result of a vow made during a mystical experience, discussed later in this study, Luther

3 Jacobs: Martin Luther, p. 16.

entered, on July 17, 1505, the Augustinian monastery at Erfurt, with the hope of securing peace for his soul through living a monk's life. Many elements in his monastery experience tended to deepen his mystical tendency.

The first of these elements which we mention is the *asceticism* of the monastic life. It was characterized by humility, often of a false kind; by a strict self-denial, mortification of the body, fasting and other disciplines. Luther writes: "In truth I have often fasted until I became sick and was almost dead." Of his faithfulness to the rules of the monastery he writes: "Verily, I was a devout monk, and followed the rules of the order so strictly that I cannot tell you all. If ever a monk entered into heaven by his monkish merits, certainly I should have obtained entrance there. All the monks who knew me will confirm this; and if it had lasted much longer, I should have become literally a martyr, through watchings, prayer, reading and other labors."[4] He even pursued some of his studies "alone for the practical end that, by subjection to this discipline, he might find peace of conscience in assurance of salvation." In many of his efforts it was this mystical "assurance of salvation," and spiritual peace that Luther desired. He constantly sought personal experience.

In the monastery, Luther's *studies* were a continuation of the authors he followed in the Uni-

4 Morris: Quaint Sayings and Doings concerning Luther, p. 33.

versity, chiefly Gerson, Biel, D'Ailly, and Occam. A treatise by St. Bernard was placed in his hands from which he gained immediate and lasting benefits. During his spiritual struggles the aim of his friends was to show him the personal application of the Gospel and to call upon him to experience personally the message of the Scriptures. In the treatise by St. Bernard, the emphasis was placed upon the word *"tibi,"* "for thee." The comfort Luther received from this treatise can be seen in the fact that he reflects its influence in his explanation of the Lord's Supper, in his *Small Catechism* (1529) emphasizing the personal experience. He writes:

Who is it, then, that receives this Sacrament worthily?

"Answer. Fasting and bodily preparation are indeed a good external discipline; but he is truly worthy and well prepared, who believes these words: 'Given and shed for you, for the remission of sins.' But he who does not believe these words, or who doubts, is unworthy and unfit; for these words: 'For you,' require truly believing hearts."[5]

Upon entering the Augustinian Order Luther received the name, "Brother Augustine." The writings of St. Augustine formed the basis of the constitution of the Order and his works were carefully and faithfully studied. In these writings Luther found comfort and support for his faith. Luther claims that he followed the example of St.

5 Jacobs: The Book of Concord. Vol. I, p. 374.

Augustine in going back to the sources of the Christian faith rather than accepting the word of the Fathers. He constantly appealed to the writings of St. Augustine as for instance at the Leipzig Disputation. He held St. Augustine to be the highest among the Church Fathers, and referred his friends to his writings.

Two *personal friends* came to Luther's aid in his spiritual conflicts, the Father Confessor of the monastery, whose name has not been preserved to history, and the Vicar-General of the Order, John von Staupitz. The former brought comfort to Luther by making personal application of the Gospel, a particular instance of which is given in another part of this chapter.

Dr. Staupitz is described as being "of a deeply mystical type of Christianity," also that he stood "upon the basis of the hitherto practical mysticism."[6] Luther acknowledges the influence of Dr. Staupitz upon his life when he writes: "If Dr. Staupitz, or rather God, through Dr. Staupitz, had not aided me in this, I would have been long since in hell." Staupitz emphasized the love of God, the inward turning of the soul to God, and other teachings savoring of the mysticism of Tauler, and other German mystics. He taught Luther that much in his convent experience and life was useless, especially the attempts to experience God through the so-called righteous works. He taught Luther that repentance was not so much an act, or succession

6 Koestlin: The Theology of Luther. Eng. Tr. Vol. I, p. 68.

of acts as a state of heart and life. This latter thought is echoed in the first of Luther's Ninety-Five Theses which were published in 1517: "Our Lord and Master Jesus Christ in saying: 'Repent ye; etc.' intended that the whole life of believers should be penitence."[7]

The Augustinian Order required diligence in the *study of the Holy Scriptures.* Luther was very faithful in this study, giving special attention to the Psalter, Romans, and Hebrews. His study of Romans and other writings of Paul gave him comfort. After he had gained a true conception of the righteousness of God as portrayed by Paul, he began to find peace. Paul's words, "the just shall live by faith," brought peace to his troubled soul, and it was this phrase that entered into a number of the mystical experiences of Luther. One reason that Luther found comfort in the writings of Paul was that there is a marked similarity between the religious experiences of the two individuals. The teachings of Paul dominated the later thought of Luther, and furnished the central doctrine of the Reformation, "Justification by faith."

Luther found comfort in the mystical character of Paul's experience, and teaching. For instance, we can take Paul's words in Galatians 2:20: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son

7 See Luther's Primary Works, edited by Wace and Bucheim.

of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." Commenting upon this verse, Luther writes:

"He [Christ] is my form, my furniture and perfection, adorning and beautifying my faith, as the colour, the clear light, or the whiteness do garnish and beautify the wall. Thus we are constrained grossly to set forth this matter. For we cannot spiritually conceive that Christ is so nearly joined and united unto us, as the colour of whiteness is unto the wall. Christ therefore, saith he, thus joined and united unto me and abiding in me liveth this life in me which now I live; yea, Christ Himself is this life which now I live. Wherefore Christ and I in this behalf are both one."[8]

Luther gives a far more extensive treatment of this verse, but the above excerpt suffices to show Luther's perfect harmony and sympathy with the mysticism of Paul.

The *prayer life* of the monastery was formal and lacked the warmth of personal religion. It consisted, mainly in conformity to "hours" and the repetition of the Pater Noster, and the Ave Maria. It is true that Luther found little or no comfort in this prayer life but it opened the way for a true prayer life which became a strong factor in Luther's later life.

Upon the recommendation of his monastery friend, Dr. Staupitz, Luther was called to be a professor at the University of Wittenberg. His first

8 Luther's Commentary on Galatians. (S. S. Miles edition), p. 267.

duty was that of lecturing upon the *Dialectics* and *Physics* of Aristotle. From the very first Luther had a dislike for philosophy, and preferred theology to philosophy. He availed himself of the opportunity of introducing Scriptural studies along with the studies in Aristotle. He continued to study St. Augustine, the "patron saint" of the university. Also, he paid considerable attention to the study of the writings of St. Paul, who was the theological guide of the university teachers. It was during Luther's incumbency as a professor at Wittenberg that he made the journey to Rome, and met with such disappointment. On this journey he experienced a mystical state treated in another portion of this study.

His studies in the Scriptures centered about Paul's letter to the Romans, and the Psalms. In the former he found the doctrine of Justification by Faith which was to mean so much to him later. In the Psalms he found that the writer had experiences similar to his own, and the record of the struggles and spiritual conflicts of the Psalmist came as a relief to Luther's heart. He paid particular attention to the penitential Psalms, and he himself sought the "*inward* imparting of the forgiveness of sins." In his treatment of the Psalms we see the effort of Luther *to experience* the message of the Scripture. In his lectures upon the Psalms which he gave in 1513, and then again in 1517, he made use of the writings of Bernhard,

Hugo of St. Victor, and Bonaventura, all of whom were of a deep mystical nature.

During this time, Luther was reading the mystical writings of Tauler. Luther's appreciation of Tauler's worth is seen in these words from a letter Luther wrote to Spalatin in 1516: "If you take any pleasure in reading the ancient and pure Theology in the German language, read the sermons of John Tauler. For neither in the Latin, nor the German language, have I found purer and more wholesome theology, nor any that so agrees with the Gospel."[9] Again, "Although he is unknown to the theologians in the schools, nevertheless I know that I have found more pure doctrine therein than I have found or can be found in all the books of the Scholastics at all universities."

Through the writings of Tauler, Luther was attracted to a work known as the *Theologia Germanica*.[10] It became one of the chief sources of his mysticism. According to Winkworth this work was probably written in 1350. It is the "literary gem" of the religious movement known as the "Friends of God." The author of the work is unknown, but this is not strange when we know their principles of self-abnegation. The work was brought to light by Luther, who published a portion of it in 1516, under the title, *"Was der alte und neue Mensch*

9 Jacobs: Martin Luther, p. 45.

10 Theologia Germanica. Tr. from the German by Susanna Winkworth. London: Macmillian Co., Ltd. Prof. Reuss, the Librarian of the University of Wurtzburg, discovered a manuscript of the Theologia Germanica bearing the date of 1497, which has been published by Prof. Pfieffer of Prague.

sei." In 1518 he issued a second edition to which he added a preface giving his estimate of the work. Among other things he wrote: "Next to the Bible and St. Augustine, no book hath ever come into my hands, whence I have learnt, or would wish to learn more of what God, and Christ, and man and all things are."

We close this portion of the study dealing with the mystical influences entering into Luther's life, with the comment of Koestlin: "The influence of mediaeval mysticism in giving shape to his general conception of doctrine is very marked."

II. EVIDENCES OF LUTHER'S MYSTICISM.

1. Mystical States.

There is no doubt that Luther experienced "mystical states," and that these had a powerful influence upon his life and action. His so-called "conversion" is the first of any importance. He was on his way from Mansfield to Erfurt, when he encountered a severe storm. He became frightened and as was common to him and his day, he saw the hand of God in this manifestation of nature. He constantly realized the Unseen in the works of nature. "In an instant a flash of blinding splendor seemed to kindle the world, and a deafening thunderclap shook the ground. It was as if death leaped upon Martin. He sank down, and so soon as he regained a clear consciousness of life, he cried out, "Help, sweet Saint Anne; save me, save me, and I

will become a monk."[11] This incident occurred on July 2, 1505. And against all the protests of his father and friends he entered the Augustinian cloister, on July 17th, thus carrying out the vow he made during the storm, and following what he believed to be the Divine Will.

While in the monastery Luther had a constant spiritual struggle. He was constantly fretting about his sins and misdoings.

In his classification of mystical states and experiences Professor James mentions first, "the deepened sense of the significance of a maxim or formula which sweeps over one."[12] It is interesting to note that he uses an experience of Luther to illustrate this type. Luther writes: "When a fellow-monk one day repeated the words, 'I believe in the forgiveness of sins,' I saw the Scripture in an entirely new light; and straightway I felt as if I had found the door of Paradise thrown wide open."

A similar experience is brought out in this record from Luther: "I often confessed to Dr. Staupitz, and put to him, not trivial matters, but questions going to the very knot of the question. He answered me as all the other confessors have answered me: *'I do not understand.'* At last he came to me one day, when I was at dinner, and said: 'How is it that you are so sad, Brother Martin?' 'Ah,' I replied, 'I am sad indeed.' 'You know not that such trials are good and necessary for you,

11 Bayne: Martin Luther, Vol. I, p. 142.
12 James: Varieties of Religious Experience.

but would not be so for any one else.' All he meant to imply was, that as I had some learning, I might, but for these trials, have become haughty and supercilious; but I have felt since that what he said was, as it were, a voice and an inspiration of the Holy Spirit."[13]

Luther's "second conversion" is also illustrative of the mystical element. The thoughts of Staupitz, "acted upon, helped Luther gradually to win his way to peace, and he told Staupitz long afterwards that it was he who had made him see the rays of light which dispelled the darkness of his soul. In the end, the vision of the true relation of the believing man to God came to him suddenly with all the force of a personal revelation and the storm-tossed soul was at rest. The sudden enlightenment, the personal revelation which was to change his whole life came to him when he was reading the *Epistle to the Romans* in his cell. It came to Paul when he was riding on the road to Damascus; to Augustine as he was lying under a fig-tree in the Nutan Garden; to Francis as he paced anxiously the flag-stones of the Partincula chapel on the plain beneath Assissi; to Suso as he sat at the table in the morning. It spoke through different words: to Paul, 'Why persecutest thou, me?' to Augustine, 'Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh;' to Francis, 'Get you no gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, no wallet for your journey, neither two coats, nor shoes nor

13 Table-Talk.

staff;' to Suso, 'My son, if thou wilt hear my words.' But though the words were different, the personal revelation which mastered the men was the same."[14]

A truly mystical state with an auditory experience was the instance in the Church at Wittenberg. He had just began explaining the Epistle to the Romans. When he came to the thought the "just shall live by faith," the idea penetrated his mind, and it seemed to him that he heard these words spoken aloud several times.[15]

In 1511, Luther made a journey to the Holy City, Rome, on business for the Order of which he was a member. His disappointment at the things he saw and heard had a telling effect upon his entire life, and hastened his break with the Catholic Church. It was while on this journey that Luther experienced what was virtually a mystical state.

He was climbing the twenty-eight steps of the so-called judgment seat of Pilate, on his knees, that he might secure the treasure of indulgence by this act. While ascending the stairway there was a flash came to his mind and thought, that bore the message of his deep study of the Scripture, "The just shall live by faith." The words "came to him as though uttered in tones of thunder."

2. Natural Mysticism.

There is a deep strain of mysticism in Luther's

14 Lindsay: The Reformation. Vol. I.
15 Lombroso: The Man of Genius.

view of nature. It is true that Luther had nothing in the way of a scientific view of nature but he advanced beyond the prevailing thought that only the Evil One was manifested in nature. He held this to be true, as was common to his time, but he also saw God in nature. Natural mysticism may be defined in these words from Inge, "Nature is the language in which God expresses His thought; but the thoughts are far more than language."[16] Luther saw a deep significance in nature. He saw the life of God reflected there, as in his words, "God is in the smallest creature, in the leaf, or the blade of grass."[17]

His interest in nature and his sympathetic interpretation is brought out in the following: "That little bird has chosen his shelter, and is quietly rocking himself to sleep without a care for tomorrow's lodging, calmly holding by his little twig, and leaving God to think for him."[18]

Pfleiderer says of Luther: "His feeling of nature was of a fineness, fervor, and sensibility such as belongs genuinely to poetic natures.....In his reflective contemplation and sympathetic vivification of nature no one stands nearer to Luther than Goethe."[19]

3. Symbolism.

The study of mysticism reveals the fact that in all ages it has found expression in art and symbol-

16 Inge: Christian Mysticism.
17 Pfleiderer: Evolution and Theology, p. 72.
18 Table-Talk.
19 Pfleiderer: Evolution and Theology.

ism. Luther's father had a coat-of-arms composed of a bow and arrow flanked by two small roses. Luther adopted for his use a coat-of-arms using as its basis the rose, but he enlarged upon it in order to carry out his religious ideals and views. Jacobs speaks of Luther's design as "an emblem of his theology." The depth of meaning Luther places in each element of his design is characteristic of mysticism.

Writing from Coburg, to Lazarus Spengler, Government Clerk at Nuremberg, who was a friend of Luther, he gives the following description of his coat-of-arms: "As you desire to know whether my seal is correct, I will give you my first thoughts, for good company, which I intend to have engraven upon my seal, as expressive of my theology. The first thing was to be a cross (black) within the heart, and having its natural color, to put me in mind that faith in Christ crucified saves us. 'For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness.' Now, although the cross is black, mortified, and intended to cause pain, yet does it not change the color of the heart, does not corrupt, *i. e.*, does not kill, but keeps alive. 'For the just shall live by faith,'—but by faith in the Saviour. But this heart is fixed upon the center of a white rose, to show that faith causes joy and consolation and peace, not as the world gives peace and joy. For this reason the rose is white and not red, because white is the color of all angels and blessed spirits. This rose, moreover, is fixed in a sky-colored ground, to de-

note that such joy of faith in the spirit is but an earnest and beginning of heavenly joy to come, as anticipated and held by hope, though not yet revealed. And around this ground-base is a golden ring, to signify that such bliss in heaven is endless, and more precious than all the joys and treasures, since gold is the best and most precious metal."[20]

4. Diabolical Mysticism.

"Diabolical mysticism" is a term used by Goerres, in his five volume work on mysticism.[21] This term includes witchcraft and diabolical possession. It covers the so-called manifestations of the Evil One in nature. Professor James writes of it as "religious mysticism turned up-side down." In common with the beliefs of his time, Luther held many superstitions and false views in regard to the works of nature, and the diseases of the human body. The following paragraphs from Luther will show that his thought was saturated with this phase of mysticism. One day when there was a storm abroad, Luther said: "'Tis the devil who does this; the winds are nothing else than good or bad spirits. Hark! how the devil is putting and blowing."[22] Again he writes: "Idiots, the lame, the blind, the dumb, are men in whom devils have established themselves; and all the physicians who heal those infirmities as though they proceeded from natural

20 De Wette, 4:79 sqq. Quoted by Morris: Quaint Sayings, p. 175.

21 Inge: Christian Mysticism.

22 Michelet's Life of Luther. Tr. by Hazlitt.

causes, are ignorant blockheads, who know nothing about the power of the demon."[23]

"There is no proof," writes Ireland, "that the delusions and hallucinations to which the German reformer was subject did in any way alter or modify his religious views."[24] But, surely, this type of mind, and temperament was a determining factor in the formation of his views.

5. Religious Mysticism.

A. General Conceptions.

a. Faith.

In any genuine religious faith there is a mystical element. To Luther, as to St. Paul, faith was not merely historical assent, but a warm religious experience. It was not mere acceptance of the historicity of Christ and the Gospel, but a real communion, and spiritual union with God and Christ. Faith to Luther, was "life to God."[25] "A gift of God,"[26] Christ "standing in our hearts."[27]

Luther taught that "through faith" a Christian man "passes above himself into God; out of God he passes beneath himself through love, and yet remains ever in God and the divine love."[28]

He distinguishes two kinds of faith. "There are two kinds of believing: first, a believing about God which means that I believe that what is said

23 Ibid.
24 Ireland: The Blot upon the Brain, p. 55.
25 Pfleiderer, p. 53.
26 Ibid, p. 179.
27 Lenker ed. 11:355.
28 Primary Works, p. 131.

of God is true. There is, secondly, a believing without any doubt that He will be and do to me according to the things said of Him. Such faith, which throws itself upon God, whether in life or in death, alone makes a Christian man."[29] The thought of throwing one's self back upon God is a thought expressed by many mystics.

Faith is at the basis of God working in a Christian. "The way of the Lord, as you have heard, is that he does all things within you, so that all our works are not ours but his, which comes by faith."[30]

b. Reason.

Luther's attitude towards reason was that of a mystic. He subordinated reason to faith. It is true that the object of faith in Luther's case differed from that of the extreme mystic. Luther's faith was grounded upon the message of the Holy Scriptures, while that of the extreme mystics is grounded upon the revelations received directly, personally, and intuitively. Luther held that reason had no share in things eternal, spiritual, and heavenly. When it attempted to interpret these things it should be designated as "Frau Hulda," "Harlot," etc.[31] He held the "feeble" knowledge of God attainable by reason to be "not a whit better than no knowledge at all."[32]

"It is not possible to understand even the smallest article of faith by human reason; so that no

29 Er. 22:15. Lindsay, p. 429.
30 Lenker, 10:124.
31 Koestlin: Theology of Luther, Vol. I, p. 216.
32 Ibid, p. 263.

man on earth has ever been able to catch or grasp a proper idea, or certain knowledge of God."[33] His approach to the Scripture is indicated in his words: "Just shut your eyes and say: What Christ says must be true, though no man can understand how it can be true."[34] Luther contended that a thing might be false in philosophy and true in theology. "In theology, so much must be heard and believed, and established in the heart, God is truthful, however absurd the things He declares in His Word may appear to reason."

In his sermon for Ascension Day, where he discusses Christ's Ascension into Heaven, he writes: "Reason cannot comprehend how this can be. therefore, it is an article of faith. Here one must close his eyes and not follow reason, but lay hold of all by faith. For how can reason grasp the thought that there should be a being like ourselves, who is all-seeing and knows all hearts and gives all men faith and the Spirit; or that he sits above in heaven, and yet is present with us and in us and rules over us? Therefore, strive not to comprehend it, but say: This is Scripture and this is God's Word, which is immeasurably higher than all understanding and reason. Cease your reasoning and lay hold of the Scriptures which testify of this being—how He ascended to heaven and sits at the right hand of God and exercises dominion."[35]

33 Ibid, p. 264.
34 Ibid, p. 265.
35 Lenker, 12:191.

In his view of reason, Luther imbibed the spirit of the older theologians who were wont to quote as their guides: "credo ut intelligam;" and "credo quia impossibilis."

c. Prayer.

Prayer to Luther was "not an ascending of the mind (mentis) but an uplifting of the soul (animae)."[36] In prayer the believer's heart mounts up to God. The power of prayer, Luther taught, must be learned through experience.

His familiarity with God, and his consciousness of His presence is brought out in this prayer offered by Luther at the Diet of Worms: "O, God, O Thou, my God, do Thou, my God stand by me, against all the world's wisdom and reason. Oh, do it. Thou must do it. Yea, Thou alone must do it. .... O God, dost Thou not hear me, O my God? Art Thou dead? .... Hast Thou chosen me for this work? I ask Thee how I may be sure of this. Thou art my God, where art Thou?"[37] The entire prayer offered under the trial of the occasion of which the above is but an extract breathes the same fervor and devotion and nearness to God.

His own practice in prayer is suggested in his words written from Coburg to his friend Spalatin: "I am here like a hermit, and like a land without water. I am unable to produce anything which I consider worth writing about to you, except that with all the might of prayer, with prayerful sighs

36 Koestlin, Vol. II, p. 472.
37 Jacobs: Martin Luther, p. 196.

and groans, I endeavor to reach heaven, and, though wicked, knock at the gate of Him, who has said, 'Knock, and it shall be opened unto you.' "[38]

Veit Dietrich writes of Luther: "He prays as devoutly as one who is conversing with God, and with such hope and faith as one who addresses his father."[39]

d. Mystical Method.

Practically every mystic, and especially those who can be looked upon as leaders, laid down some plan or formula for the attainment of the highest states of mystical consciousness. St. Theresa had a methodical plan. The *Theologia Germanica* contains suggestions of such methods. The nearest approach to such a mystical formula on the part of Luther is his statement, with its explanations: *"Oratio, Tentatio, Meditatio faciunt Theologum."*[40] *Oratio,* Luther explains in this manner: "Kneel in thy closet, and with real humility and earnestness beg God that through His dear Son He will give His Holy Spirit to you to enlighten you, guide you, and give you understanding; as thou seest that David in the 119th Psalm continually begs: *Teach me, Lord; show me; guide me; instruct me;* and the like. Even though he had the text of Moses, and well knew other books and daily heard and read them, yet did he wish to have the real Master

38 Morris, p. 128.
39 Ibid, p. 129.
40 Gerberding: The Lutheran Pastor, p. 200.

of the Scripture also that he might not be left to his own reason and be his own teacher."

Commenting upon *Tentatio,* he says: "As soon as God's Word has free course through thee, Satan will visit thee to make a real doctor of thee, and by means of temptation to teach thee to seek and to love the Word of God."

Luther explains *Meditatio* thus: "Not only in the heart, but externally to study and analyze the spoken and the written Word, to read it and read it again, with diligent attention and reflection in order to discover the meaning of the Holy Ghost in it."

This is truly a mystical "ladder" suggested by Luther for the approach to God.

e. Self-abnegation.

A trait characteristic of Luther's mysticism is that of self-surrender even to the point of self-abnegation; an approach to "the Augustinian feeling of human nothingness." Luther advises believers to "lower and despise" themselves.[41] He refers to himself as "a poor offensive worm of the dust."[42] He suggests to believers: "despair not of God's grace but of your own unworthiness."[43] "There is nothing but demerit and unworthiness on your side."[44] How like the message of the *Theologia Germanica* is the following: "Behold, here is the

41 Lenker, 10:12.
42 Ibid, 14:243.
43 Ibid, 10:22.
44 Ibid, 10:25.

beginning of your salvation; you relinquish your works and despair of yourself; because you hear and see that all you do is sin and amounts to nothing."[45]

The feeling of "human-nothingness: extends to despair. Despair follows when man becomes conscious of his evil motives, and realizes that it is impossible for him to love the law of God, finding nothing good in himself."[46]

This spirit of self-abnegation implies humility: "Therefore man must humble himself, and confess that he is lost and that all his works are sins, aye, that his whole life is sinful."[47]

This sense of human depravity is gained through faith: "For faith immediately teaches that everything human is nothing before God. Hence they despise self and think nothing of themselves."[48]

It is through self-surrender and self-abnegation that one overcomes trouble and finds peace: "They are the true and real pupils, who keep the law, who know and are conscious that they do evil, and make naught of themselves, surrender themselves, count all their works unclean in the eyes of God, and despair of goodness and all their own works. They who do this, shall have no trouble, except that they must not deceive themselves with vain fruitless thoughts and defer this matter until death; for if

45 Ibid, 10:26.
46 Ibid, 10:98.
47 Ibid, 10:132.
48 Ibid, 10:165.

anyone persistently postpones until death, he will have a sad future."[49]

f. Quietism.

Qietism is that form of mysticism which seeks "to attain to a perfect repose of the soul in God. Every desire and motion of the will is to be mortified. The will of God alone is to be active."[50]

The passive, inactive side of mysticism never appealed to Luther, but he sought for, and gained peace of mind and heart. This is shown in his every-day life, and in times of greatest storm and stress. He constantly felt the care of God about him, and showed his peace of soul by his indifference to worldly goods and possessions. This spirit is clearly shown in one verse of his famous "Ein Feste Burg:"

> "Destroy they our life,
> Goods, fame, child and wife?
> Let all pass amain,
> They still no conquest gain,
> For ours is still the Kingdom."[51]

Under trying circumstances we find that Luther possessed this peace of soul, and constantly felt he was doing God's will in his great reformatory efforts. Indicative of this spirit and peace of soul are his memorable words at the Diet of Worms:

49 Ibid, 11:367, 368.
50 A. G. Voigt, Lutheran Cyclopedia Article.
51 Book of Worship.

"Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise. God help me."

Luther makes the peace of quietism the mark of true faith. This is brought out especially in a sermon upon the lesson for the First Sunday after Trinity: "Among the fruits of faith are these: peace and joy..... For the fruit of faith is peace, not only that which one has outwardly, but that of which Paul speaks to the Phillipians (4, 7) saying it is peace that passeth all reason, sense, and understanding. And where this peace is, one shall not and cannot judge according to reason."[52]

This peace is the mark of true Christians: "Thus we have the fruit whereby we know that we are true Christians. For he who has no peace in that in which the world finds nothing but unrest and is joyful in that in which the world is nothing but gloom and sorrow is not yet a Christian, and does not yet believe....." He continues this thought in commenting upon an Easter hymn of the day, and accepts the message of the hymn by his words: "Christ will be our consolation, that we can and shall have no other consolation but Christ. He wants to be it himself and he alone, that we should cling to him in every time of need; for he has conquered all for our benefit, and by his resurrection he comforts all troubled and sad hearts."

g. Imitation of Christ.

52 Lenker, 11:355.

The imitation of Christ has been a favorite discipline and theme of mystics. In fact, the work of Thomas a Kempis bearing this title has been termed the "finest flower of Christian mysticism." Luther mentions that he studied Thomas a Kempis, and his influence is seen in Luther's writings. He writes, Christ "is the sun and is set for our example, which we must imitate. For this reason there will always be found among us some who are weak, others that are strong, and again some that are stronger; these are able to suffer less, those more; and so they must all continue in the imitation of Christ."[53]

This is also brought out in his sermon for the First Sunday after Easter: "The Lord desires to say: You have received enough from me, peace and joy, and all you should have; for your person you need nothing more. Therefore labor now and follow my example, as I have done, so do ye. My Father sent Me into the world for your sake, that I might serve you, not for My own benefit. I have finished the work, have died for you, and given all that I am and have; remember and do ye likewise, that henceforth ye may only serve and help everybody, otherwise ye would have nothing to do on earth."[54]

h. Interpretation of Scripture.

In his interpretation of Scripture Luther followed to a great extent, especially in his early life

53 Lenker, 11:212.
54 Ibid, 11:359.

and work, mystical lines of explanation. This method may be defined as one that seeks for a meaning "which is not immediately signified by the inspired words." In using this method Luther was following a method that had been in common use previous to and during the time of the Reformation, and is found at the present time.

In his *Annotations Upon the Psalter* he followed the traditional method of the old school of theologians and looks for a three-fold sense in Scripture, the allegorical, the tropological, the mystical. In his interpretations of the Psalms he constantly seeks for, and diverges from the literal meaning to find "declarations of Christ concerning Himself."

The same is true in his *Church Postil,* his sermons on the pericopes for the Church Year. Here he does not follow a scheme of interpretation of the Psalms, but adds to a literal explanation of the text a "spiritual meaning" of the passage. In beginning his interpretation of the lesson for the First Sunday in Advent, he writes: "Let us now treat of its hidden or spiritual meaning." Similarly, in opening the explanation of the lesson for the Second Sunday in Advent, he writes, "Finally, we must find also a hidden or spiritual meaning in this Gospel."

As an example of his mystical interpretation we give his interpretation of Matthew 21:8, which reads, "And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strewed them in the way."

In explaining this, Luther writes: "The garments are the examples of the patriarchs and the prophets, and the histories of the Old Testament. For, as we shall learn, the multitude that went before, signifies the saints before the birth of Christ, by whom the sermon in the New Testament and the way of faith are beautifully adorned and honored. Paul does likewise when he cites Abraham, Isaac, Jacob; and Peter cites Sarah, and, in Heb. 11, many patriarchs are named as examples, and by these are confirmed faith and the works of faith in a masterly way. The branches mean the sayings of the prophets, one of which is mentioned in this Gospel, which are not stories nor examples but the prophecy of God. The trees are the books of the prophets. Those who preach from these cut branches and spread them in the way of Christian faith."[55]

B. Formal Doctrines.

a. Conception of God.

Luther's conception of God was influenced by mysticism. This influence is seen in the following: "But the God who does have a meaning for us is the one whom the Scriptures show us as our God, for He gives us His presence, light and law, and talks with us."[56]

Again, "Since heaven is His throne, so does He extend far over the heavens; and since the earth is

55 Lenker, 10:54.

56 Walch, 1:2324. Quoted by Walcott, Lutheran and Kantian Elements in Ritschl's Conception of God, p. 8.

His footstool, so must He also be in the entire world. He fills everything and must be everywhere present."[57]

The entire doctrine of the Trinity is deeply mystical; teaching the oneness in essence of the three Persons. Luther found evidence of the Trinity in nature. The following involves both symbolism and natural mysticism: "The Trinity is discoverable throughout all creation. In the sun co-exist body, brilliancy, and heat; in rivers, body, current and strength; the same is true of the arts, and sciences. In astronomy there are motion, light, and influence; in music, the three notes, *re, mi, fa;* and so on. The schoolmen have neglected these important signs for frivolities."[58]

b. The Holy Spirit.

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit wherever found is mystical. It constantly implies "divine intervention." Luther depended upon the Holy Spirit to make clear the meaning of the Scripture. In addition to this thought he taught that the Spirit attests truth, leads men to action, applies the law, awakens faith, and dwells in the believer. In study and meditation he suggests that "the presence of the Holy Spirit" be sought. Luther conceived the Church as being comprised of believers who "have with them the Holy Spirit who sanctifies them and works in them by the Word and sacraments."[59]

57 Ibid, p. 6.
58 Michelet, p. 268.
59 Lenker, 14:249.

c. The Scriptures.

Besides a tendency towards the mystical interpretation of the Scriptures, Luther displayed a mystical trait in his general view of the Scriptures; as to its value and use to the believer. Characteristic of his warm religious views is the following: "As the meadow is to the cow, the house to the man, the nest to the bird, the rock to the chamois, and the stream to the fish, so is the Holy Scriptures to the believing soul."[60]

Luther found God in the Scriptures. The Word came as spiritual food and nourishment to the soul of the believer. He writes: "We see that in all things it is not the food, but the Word of God that nourishes every human being."[61]

d. The Church.

The Church to Luther was a mystical body. Each believer was united to Christ; and thus they were united one to another, by all being united to one common Head. In partaking of the same sacraments, mystical in their character, the members become a "community of saints." In a sermon for the "Second Christmas Day" he writes: "Now the Church is not wood and stone, but the company of believing people; one must hold to them and see how they believe, live and teach; they surely have Christ in their midst."[62]

60 Lindsay, Vol. I, p. 211.
61 Lenker, 11:140.
62 Lenker, 10:170.

e. Justification by Faith.

Luther's "basal principle was ever justification by faith in Christ, as set forth by Paul and experienced by himself."[63] While he held justification to be a forensic act upon the part of God, yet the believer was to experience it; and was to feel that he stood justified in the eyes of God. This justification the believer appropriated through faith, which is a mystical relationship. Faith is the hand by which the believer reaches out and takes hold of justification.

f. Baptism.

Using the word "symbol" in the sense of "something which, in being what it is, is a sign and vehicle of something higher and better," Inge classifies the two sacraments, Baptism and the Eucharist, as truly mystical symbols. "Both are symbols of the mystical union between the Christian and the ascended Lord."[64] In this sense and even in a deeper sense these sacraments had a mystical content in the view of Luther.

The simplest statement from Luther bearing upon Baptism is from his *Smaller Catechism:* "Baptism is not simply water, but it is the water comprehended in God's command and connected with God's Word."[65]

In the view of Luther the benefits of Baptism also reveal its mystical character: "It worketh for-

63 Koestlin: Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia.
64 Inge: Christian Mysticism, p. 256.
65 Book of Concord, p. 370.

giveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and confers everlasting salvation on all who believe as the Word and promise of God declare."[66]

In explaining how baptism produces these effects, Luther writes: "It is not the water indeed that produces these effects, but the Word of God which accompanies and is connected with the water, and our faith, which relies on the Word of God connected with the water. For the water without the Word of God, is simply water, and no baptism. But when connected with the Word of God, it is baptism; that is, a precious water of life and a 'washing of regeneration in the Holy Ghost.' "[67]

The same thought is emphasized in his *Larger Catechism.* He insists that Baptism is more than water. "The substantial part in the water is God's Word, or command, and God's name."[68] A sacrament receives its validity by its connection with the Word: "When the Word is joined to the element, or earthly constituent, the result is a sacrament, that is, a holy divine thing, and sign."[69] "Therefore, I admonish that these two, the Word and the water, be by no means disunited and considered separately. For when the Word is taken away the water is no different from that which the servant uses for cooking purposes; baptism under that condition might be called a bath-keeper's baptism. But

66 Ibid, p. 370.
67 Book of Concord, p. 371.
68 Lenker, 24:160.
69 Ibid, 24:161.

when the Word is present according to God's ordinance, baptism is a sacrament and it is called Christ's sacrament."[70]

Baptism brings about a changed and renewed life. "Grace and righteousness are first *imparted* at Baptism.[71] It is then necessarily true that as one comes from his baptism he is clean and without sin, perfectly sinless."[72]

The presence of God in baptism, Luther teaches in these words: "To be baptized into God's name is to be baptized, not by man, but by God."[73]

The height of mysticism in Baptism is seen in the thought of union with God. Luther recognizes this union and the high position it holds in the interpretation of the doctrine of baptism, in the following: "Now, we come to the correct understanding and conception of Baptism. The benefit of the sacrament of baptism is this, that therein God unites Himself with you and he becomes one with you in a gracious, comforting covenant."[74]

g. Lord's Supper.

The mystic Meister Eckhart, speaking of the Lord's Supper, said, "I would never desire to eat and drink thereof, if there were not something of God in it."[75] Luther's doctrine of the "Real Presence" implies this same thought. In his *Smaller*

70 Ibid.
71 Ibid, 24:313.
72 Ibid, 24:316.
73 Ibid, 24:159.
74 Lenker, 24:318.
75 Remensnyder: Mysticism, p. 16.

Catechism, Luther defines the Eucharist as "the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, given unto us Christians to eat and to drink, as it was instituted by Christ Himself."[76] Similar to this is the explanation in the *Larger Catechism,* "it is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, in and under the bread and wine which Christians are commanded by the Word of Christ to eat and to drink."[77]

Baptism remains the initiatory Sacrament, the Lord's Supper is the food and nourishment for the soul, therefore the believer receives it occasionally.

Luther explained the presence of Christ in the Supper by saying, that Christ was "in, with, and under" the Bread and the Wine. In defense of his view he writes in his *Greater Confession:* "If the text was, *In* the bread is the body, or *With* the bread, or *Under* the bread, then would the fanatics have cried, See, Christ does not say 'The bread is My body, but *In* the bread is My body.' Gladly would we believe a true presence, if He had only said, 'This is My body.' That would be clear; but He only says, '*In* the bread, *with* the bread, *under* the bread, is My body.' It consequently does not follow that His body is there. If Christ had said, *In* the bread is My body, they could more plausibly have said, Christ is in the bread spiritually, or by significance. For if they can find a figure in the words, This is My body, much more could they find

76 Book of Concord, p. 375.
77 Lenker, 24:175.

it in the other words, In the bread is My body: for it is a clearer and simpler utterance to say, This is my body than to say In this is my body."[78]

Luther's view found expression in a practical and popular way in his sermons. He writes of "having received the Lord and all that he is in the Lord's Supper."[79]

In a sermon on the Lord's Supper he echoes the teachings found in the catechisms, "We believe that the true body and blood of Christ is under the bread and wine, even as it is."[80]

h. The Mystical Union.

The mystical union is that doctrine which teaches "that in Christ the very life of God has been given to man, and that those who truly receive that life are really and truly united with God."[81] This teaching is found throughout the writings of Luther. He taught "the indwelling of Christ." The mystical union is closely associated with Luther's view of faith. It is through faith that the mystical union is realized. "This faith no condemned or wicked man has, nor can he have it, for the right ground of salvation which unites Christ and the believing heart is that they have all things in common."[82]

Again, this union is taught by Luther in these words: "Therefore, it is through faith that Christ

78 Krauth: Conservative Reformation, p. 819.
79 Lenker, 11:211.
80 Lenker, 11:213.
81 Lutheran Cyclopedia.
82 Lenker, 10:143.

becomes our own, and his love is the cause that we are His. He loves, we believe, thus both are united into one."[83] "Faith in Christ makes us one with Christ and gives us for our own all that is Christ's."[84]

Among the most mystical of Luther's writings and the one that bears out this teaching of the mystical union is *"The Freedom of a Christian Man."*[85] This was one of the three works of Luther that opened the way for the Reformation. According to Koelde, this work is "perhaps the most beautiful of Luther's writings, more the result of religious contemplation than theological work, a writing full of deep mystical thoughts, which, notwithstanding its peculiar reverence to the real relations of life, ever recurs to the world of thought of the mystic."[86]

A characteristic teaching of this work is: "The third incomparable grace of faith is this, that it unites the soul to Christ, as the wife to the husband; by which mystery, as the Apostle teaches, Christ and the soul are made one flesh. Now if they are one flesh, and if a true marriage—nay, by far the most perfect of all marriages—is accomplished between them (for human marriages are but feeble types of this one great marriage), then it follows that they have become theirs in common, as well good things as evil things; so that whatsoever Christ possesses, that the believing soul may

83 Lenker, 10:145.
84 Lenker, 10:147.
85 Wace and Bucheim: Luther's Primary Works.
86 Quoted by Jacobs: Martin Luther, p. 165.

take to itself and boast of as its own, and whatever belongs to the soul, that Christ claims as His."[87]

The thoughts expressed by Luther in this early work, are reflected in his later writings. In a sermon for the Twentieth Sunday after Trinity, he writes: "It must indeed be a great, fathomless and inexpressible love of God to us, that the divine nature unites thus with us and sinks itself into our flesh and blood, so that God's Son truly becomes one flesh and one body with us, and so lovingly receives us that He is not only willing to be our brother, but also our bridegroom, and turns to us and gives us as our own all His divine treasures, wisdom, righteousness, life, strength, power, so that in Him we should also be partakers, of His divine nature."[88]

He, again, carries out the idea that this union is similar to a marriage, in these words: "The union and the marriage are accomplished by faith, so that I fully and freely rely upon Him, that He is mine..... This is a marriage and a union in the sense that they become one flesh."[89]

The mystical union is a fruit of the resurrection of Christ: "My Lord Christ has by His resurrection conquered my need, my sin, death and all evil, and will be thus with and in me."[90] Luther's admiration for and harmony with the mysticism of

87 Wace and Bucheim: Luther's Primary Works, p. 111.
88 Lenker, 14:239.
89 Lenker, 14:232.
90 Lenker, 11:357.

St. Paul, on the thought of the mystical union is seen in the following: "Just as we interpret the words of Christ, when He says: 'I am the life,' so also should we interpret these words, and say nothing philosophically of the life of the creatures in God; but on the contrary, we should consider how God lives in us, and makes us partakers of His life, so that we live through Him, of and in Him. For it cannot be denied that through Him natural life also exists, which even believers have from Him, as St. Paul says: 'In Him we live, and move, and have our being; for we are also His offspring.' "[91]

III. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF LUTHER'S MYSTICISM.

1. Union with God.

Luther's experience of union with God was not the experience of the supreme mystical state of ecstacy. His sense of union is not characterized by transiency. Prof. Geo. A. Coe quotes Brother Lawrence, a Carmelite Monk, as follows: "It was a great delusion to think that the time of prayer ought to differ from other times; that we are as strictly obliged to adhere to God by action in the time of action, as by prayer in the time of prayer."[92] This latter expresses the spirit of Luther's sense of union with God.

An element of transiency is found in the sacra-

91 Lenker, 10:188.
92 Coe: The Religion of a Mature Mind, p. 225.

ment of the Eucharist. Christ comes to the believer in an especial manner upon each partaking of the Lord's Supper.

However, in his theological conceptions of faith, mystical union, and other doctrines, Luther thought of this union as perpetual.

2. Search for Peace.

Luther entered the monastery and was faithful in the performance of its disciplines in the hope that he might find peace for his mind and soul. He first found this peace upon such occasions as when the truth of "the forgiveness of sins," and "the just shall live by faith" came upon him. It was in these mystical states of consciousness that new light and peace broke in upon him.

Meditation and prayer played a great part in bringing "mental peace" and "intellectual unity."

3. Assurance.

Closely associated with the search for peace is the desire for "assurance" of the forgiveness of one's sins and of one's acceptance with God. Luther taught that although "assurance" may not always be felt yet it *should* be felt. Koestlin writes: "Luther is horrified that the Pope 'should have entirely prohibited the certainty and assurance of divine grace.' "[93]

Luther's position is summed up in the following: "I am particularly to be certain that the word of absolution, which pledges forgiveness to me in-

93 Koestlin: Theology of Luther, Vol. II, p. 462.

dividually, is the Word of God, I am to be fully assured that since I am now in Christ and cleansed from sin by faith my life is also pleasing to God."[94]

4. Inner Witness.

Luther constantly sought the inner "witness of the spirit." One is to be inwardly prepared by the influence of the Holy Spirit. Then, too, the spirit within us should bear out the truth of the Scriptures and God's message to us. "Faith is also based on the inner witness which the spirit of God bears to believers in the right use of the Scriptures, not merely as regards its authority but also its content, so that he considered himself permitted to distinguish the higher character and value of individual books included in the Bible."[95]

In this connection it should be said that Luther did not do away with the external Word nor did he exalt the inner word above the Scriptures as the extreme mystics did; but he occasionally declared, "In the same Word comes the Spirit and gives faith where and to whom He will."[96] It was through the Spirit that each believer was able "to realize *within himself* that it (the Word) is truth."[97]

Again, he writes, "The Word, of itself, must satisfy the heart, must so enclose and lay hold upon the man, that he, though ensnared in it, feels how true and right it is."[98]

94 Ibid.
95 Koestlin: Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia article on Luther.
96 Koestlin: Theology of Luther, 1:500.
97 Ibid, 2:226.
98 Ibid, 2:227.

In a sermon on the "Method and Fruits of Justification," Luther brings out clearly the thought of inner witness: "Christians may perceive by this whether they have in themselves the Holy Spirit, to-wit, the Spirit of sons; whether they hear His voice in their hearts: for Paul saith, He crieth in their hearts which He possesseth, Abba, Father; he saith also, 'We have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father.' Thou hearest this voice when thou findest so much faith in thyself that thou dost assuredly without doubting, presume that not only thy sins are forgiven, but also that thou art the beloved Son of God, who, being certain of eternal salvation, durst, both call Him Father, and be delighted in Him with a joyful and confident heart."[99]

5. Sense of Presence.

Throughout his life Luther experienced the presence of the Unseen. He was governed by the impulse that God was with him and that he was doing God's will. This sense of presence gave him inspiration and courage for his work, and confidence in his final victory. In times of storm and stress he was especially confident of the presence of the Divine. He faced conference and Diet fearlessly in the light of this experience.

6. Experience.

Religious experience was a dominating thought in the life of Luther. His conversion was a per-

99 World's Great Sermons, Vol. I, p. 139.

sonal, real experience. He came to a knowledge of the foremost tenets of his theology by "experience." His religious experience was a warm, vital, living part of his daily life. These experiences worked in two ways: an experience led him to a doctrine; or a teaching led him to an experience.

7. Pantheism.

Many mystics have taught a pantheism in their conception of God and the universe. But a pantheistic view of God is not essential to mysticism. Professor Everett suggests that pantheism differs from mysticism in that the former conceives God as immanent, and the latter conceives God as both immanent and transcendent.[100] There is very little evidence in Luther's theology of a pantheistic tendency. Walcott suggests that Luther's doctrine of the Lord's Supper savors of pantheism.[101] Luther thought of God as both immanent and transcendent.

IV. PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION.

1. Factors Contributing to Luther's Mysticism.

a. Temperament.

By heredity, Luther had a tendency toward subjective-mindedness. This is characteristic of mystics. Prof. Leuba describes it as "the preponderance in their consciousness of the sensations, ideas, and feelings of subjective origin, to the detri-

100 Everett: Psychological Elements of Religious Faith.
101 Walcott: Lutheran and Kantian Elements in Ritschl's Conception of God.

ment of the sensations, ideas, and feelings determined more or less directly by, or referring to the outside world."[102]

As a youth Luther was serious minded. "He had been piously trained, and religion was very real to him. His imagination was peopled with angels and demons, and his life was lived in constant dependence upon the aid and protection of saints. He was emotional by temperament, subject to fits of depression, and exposed to attacks of anxiety and dread as to his fate which at times almost drove him wild. Even as a child he was frequently distressed by his sins and terrified by the fear of eternal punishment."[103] In early life he was haunted by "inner voices." He constantly had an alarmed conscience. The speculative talent was strong in him. These characteristics of youth influenced the entire life of the reformer and prepared him for a mystical theology.

Ribot mentions Luther as an example of his classification of "sensitive-actives."[104]

b. Sensitiveness.

In addition to the general suggestions under the topic of temperament a special characteristic of Luther's nature was his sensitiveness, a "delicacy of appreciation."[105] This is seen in some features of his natural mysticism.

102 Leuba: The Psychology of a Group of Christian Mystics. Mind, 14:15.
103 McGiffert, Century Magazine, Dec. 1910.
104 Ribot: The Psychology of the Emotions.
105 Baldwin: Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology.

He writes: "I lately saw two signs in the heavens. I looked from my window in the middle of the night, and saw the stars and all the majestic vault of God sustaining itself, without my being able to perceive the pillars on which the Creator had propped it. Nevertheless, it crumbled not away. There are those who search for these pillars and who would fain touch them with their hands; but not being able to find them, they lament and fear that the heavens will fall. They might touch them, the heavens would never be moved. Again, I saw heavy clouds floating over my head like the ocean. I saw no prop to sustain them; and still they fell not but saluted us gladly and passed on; and as they passed I distinguished an arch which upheld them,—a splendid rainbow. Slight it was without doubt, and delicate; one could not but tremble for it, under such a mass of clouds. So with us and our opponents. Our rainbow is weak; their clouds are heavy; but the end will tell the strength of the bow."[106]

Luther constantly interprets nature in a warm and delicate manner. He brought this spirit along with his religious experience to the translation and interpretation of the Scriptures. Dr. Gottheil, a Hebrew scholar, bears this testimony to Luther as a translator: "I have often occasion to admire his intuitive guesses at the truth, and to follow him rather than the learned commentators. He was in fullest sympathy with the writers, and understood

106 Clarke: Events and Epochs in Religious History, p. 258.

them by touch, if I may say so, where sight forsook him."[107]

This trait in Luther has often been commented upon as a "kind of inspiration." It was this insight that gave him the key to human nature and life problems.

His sensitiveness is seen in his love for music. He often said that "whoever did not love music could not be loved by Luther." He writes: "Music is a delightful and lovely gift of God; it has so often excited and moved me, so that it quickened me to preach." He held that "music is a good antidote against temptation and evil thoughts."

Music "banishes Satan," and renders men joyful; it causes men to forget all wrath, uncharity, pride, and other vices."

c. Suggestibility.

Luther was of a highly suggestible nature. This characterized him from early youth. A striking event bearing out this point is seen in a monastery incident. "As the Gospel lesson containing the account of the man possessed of the devil (Matt. XVII) was being read in the Church at Erfurt, Luther fell down in the choir and raved like one possessed."[108]

Similar to the choir incident, in the effect produced upon Luther, was an incident at Eisleben, which Luther describes in this manner: "When I

107 Ibid, p. 260.
108 Koestlin: Theology of Luther, Vol. I, p. 58.

was young, it happened, that at Eisleben, on Corpus-Christi day, I was walking with the procession, in my priest's robes, when suddenly, the sight of the Holy Sacrament, which was carried by Dr. Staupitz, so terrified me (thinking in my blindness, that it was Jesus Christ Himself the Vicar-General was carrying—that Jesus Christ in person was there before me) that a cold sweat covered my body and I believed myself dying of terror. The procession finished I confessed to Doctor Staupitz, and related to him what had happened to me. He replied, 'Your thoughts are not on Christ: Christ never alarms—He comforts.' These words filled me with joy, and were a great consolation to me."[109]

A more normal suggestibility we see in such instances where a truth comes over him with new force, as for instance, when a brother monk pointed out the words of the Apostles' Creed, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins," adding, "but we are not merely to believe that there is forgiveness for David or Peter; the command of God is, that we believe there is forgiveness for our own sins." This followed a conversation in which Luther was telling of his spiritual struggles. Luther then applied the message personally.

In a similar manner he faced the question, "Do you, then, not know that the Lord Himself has commanded us to hope (i. e. in His forgiving grace)?" In this case it was the word "commanded" that

109 Morris: Quaint Sayings and Doings Concerning Luther.

brought the results. He realized that he ought to believe in absolution.

Auto-suggestion is seen in his attempts to realize in his own experience truths presented to him. He constantly aimed to apply in a practical way the ideals that he discovered in study, and by other means.

An element of "contrary suggestion" also appears in Luther's mental frame. He was suggestible both positively and negatively. A simple case of the play of contrary suggestion is seen in an incident in the family circle. Luther was in a melancholic spirit and was in despair, feeling that God had forsaken him. His wife remarked: "No, Martin, there is no God." The suggestion awakened a lively faith in God, and drove away the melancholy.

d. The Subconscious.

The subconscious played an important part in the mysticism of Luther. The thunder-storm incident which resulted in the vow which led Luther into the monastery illustrates the subconscious activity. The thought of serving the Church lingered long in his mind, and the incident brought to a focus the under currents of his mental processes, the subconscious activities.

The message "the just shall live by faith" which came upon Luther with a suddenness and as a result of a mystical state of consciousness also demonstrates the working of the subconscious. The message gained in the monastery came to him again

and again, as for instance when in the pulpit at Wittenberg, and also when climbing the stairway at Rome.

2. Contradictory Characters.

It would be futile to attempt to harmonize the contradictions in Luther's nature. To use the phrase of Ribot there is evidence of "successive contradictory characters," in Luther.[110] The line dividing these characters is his first conversion, which led him into the monastery. This turned all his ambitions and strength from a desire to succeed in public life (in law), to service to the Church and to devotion to the religious life. The "second conversion" which was brought about by the message, "the just shall live by faith," changed his effort to gain peace through works to an effort to gain "experience" and to trust for salvation and assurance through faith.

In addition to this feature of "successive contradictory characters" in Luther's nature there is evidence of "simultaneous contradictory natures." We find him one moment the joyful individual, rejoicing in religious peace and comfort, and having a deep sense of assurance; in the next he is melancholic and marked by remorse and despair. One moment he is sure that God is on his side and the next moment he feels that God has forsaken him.

On the one hand he is marked by the spirit of self-abnegation. He considers himself a "poor

110 Ribot: The Psychology of the Emotions.

worm of the dust." But soon he recalls the great work he is engaged in and there comes upon him a sense of exaltation. He is sure that God has selected him for the particular task; and he feels inspired by God "to reveal His will to men."

He proclaims upon one occasion the necessity of imitating Christ; and in turn shows the spirit of independence in stating that in all things we cannot imitate Christ; and should only in those things which are especially emphasized.

He was a man of warm sympathy for his friends and bitter hatred, in some cases, for his enemies. He contended constantly that he was anxious to have peace with his enemies; but occasionally aimed at vexing them. Upon one occasion he made a special effort to appear young and well before a Papal legation. His barber said: "Dear Doctor, that will gall them." Luther replied: "For this very reason I am doing it. They have vexed us more than enough: serpents and foxes must be treated in this manner."[111]

These, and like contradictions appear throughout the entire life of Luther. In some cases they can be explained upon apparent reasons; in others they seem irreconcilable. These seeming contradictions in milder form gave poise and balance to Luther's nature; in their extreme form they prove unfavorable.

3. Activity.

111 Morris: Quaint Sayings and Doings Concerning Luther.

Linked with Luther's sensitiveness was a high degree of activity. His sensitive nature shunned passiveness and contemplation for a life of action. Herein he differed from the extreme mystic. In 1516, he said to Lang: "I have full employment for two secretaries. I do scarcely anything all day but write letters. I am preacher to the convent, reader of prayers at table, pastor and parish minister, director of studies, vicar of priory (that is to say, prior ten times over), inspector of the fishpond at Litzkau, counsel to the inns of Herzberg at Torgau, lecturer on St. Paul and commentator on the Psalms."[112]

The activity of Luther is seen in many lines. In the Reformation movement he stands out as the leading figure and moving force. D'Aubinge says: "The Reformation sprang living from his own heart." Many prepared the way for the Reformation and many in the time of Luther were ready for the step but only Luther was prepared in heart and mind to make the step. He fearlessly nailed his Ninety-Five Theses upon the Church door at Wittenberg and just as fearlessly burned the Bull of the Pope. In the face of opposition and contrary to the advice of friends he carried on his work. "Protestantism and Martin Luther are synonymous terms," writes Frothingham.

Luther was a voluminous writer. We have about one hundred and thirteen volumes from his pen. It was the effort of his pen that had a great

112 Morris, p. 44.

influence in the Reformation movement. His commentaries are used to this day. Delitzch writes: "In respect to experimental, mystic, and yet healthy knowledge of the meaning of Scripture, he is incomparable."

His writings furthered the Reformation, not only in Germany but in other lands. An instance of the effect of Luther's writings is seen in the words of John Wesley: "In the evening, I went unwillingly to a society (the Moravians) in Aldersgate where one was reading Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."

Early in his work, Luther saw the need of education upon the part of all classes. He advocated the founding of public schools and urged parents to attend to the education of their children. In 1524 Luther addressed a "Letter to the Mayors and Aldermen of all the Cities of Germany in behalf of Christian Schools." Among other things he wrote: "the welfare of a city does not consist alone in great treasures, firm walls, beautiful houses, and munitions of war..... But the highest welfare, safety and power of a city consists in able, learned, wise, upright, cultivated citizens, who can secure,

preserve, and utilize every treasure and advantage."[113]

Luther's catechisms were prepared in the light of the need of religious education of both young and old.

Hurst sums up the influence of Luther upon education in the following: "Public schools, though crude at first, were introduced into Germany directly through Luther's labors. The intermediate schools between the primary and the highest education were soon established. The German gymnasium of our times owes its origin to the period of the Reformation."[114]

Closely associated with the idea of popular education is that of the public library. Having written a library of one hundred and thirteen volumes, we find Luther urging the founding of public libraries. D'Aubinge writes: "Luther's attention was not limited to the education of ecclesiastics—he was desirous that learning should no longer be confined to the Church alone: and proposed to extend it to the laity, who had hitherto been barred from it. He suggested the establishment of libraries, not limited merely to works and commentaries of scholastic divines and Fathers of the Church but furnished with the productions of orators, and poets, even though heathens, as also with books of literature, law, medicine, and history."[115]

113 Quoted in Lutheran Literature, Vol. I, No. 3, p. 59.
114 Quoted in A Miracle Among Men, p. 8, by M. L. Peter.
115 Peter, p. 11.

Luther's interest was not confined to the homeland. His interest included all nations. He was anxious that lands beyond Germany should enjoy the fruits of his movement. "Luther seizes every opportunity offered by a text of the Divine Word in order to remind believers of the distress of the 'Heathen and the Turk' and earnestly urges them to pray in their behalf, and to send missionaries to them."[116]

His contribution to language and literature was also important. He gave form to the German language. Heine writes: "He translated the Bible from a language which had ceased to exist, into one which had not yet arrived..... Our dear master's thoughts had not only wings but hands; his faults have been more useful to us than the virtues of better men; how Luther got the language into which he translated the Bible is to this hour, incomprehensible to me."

In like manner he left his impress upon poetry and music. Luther himself was no mean poet and hymnist. He translated and remodeled Latin hymns and also sung his own German compositions, which he set to music. He was often spoken of as "the Wittenberg Nightingale." His "Ein Feste Burg" is sung in many languages. His hymns had a great power in his work. The Jesuit Adam Contzen wrote: "the hymns of Luther have ruined more souls than all his writings and sermons."

From a popular point of view, no result of Lu-

116 Schaff-Herzog.

ther's work stands out so prominently as modern civil and religious liberty. Frederick the Great wrote: "Had Luther done nothing else but liberate the princes and the people from the servile bondage under which the dominion of the Roman papacy held them, he would deserve to have a monument erected as the Liberator of his country."

His stand for freedom of thought at Worms and also his fearless ignoring of the Papal Bull were steps toward modern religious and civil freedom.

His activity involved the idea of courage. This rests back upon his practical mysticism, "the ordering of the life of an individual upon the basis of the sensation of some form of immediate communion with God."[117] It was such a sense of personal communion with God and sense of guidance that lead Luther in his work. He writes: "God does not conduct, but drives me, and carries me forward. I am not master of my own actions. I would gladly live in peace, but I am cast into the midst of tumult and changes."[118]

It was this consciousness of guidance that established his confidence in God. In going up to the Diet of Worms he was cautioned, "There are plenty of cardinals and bishops at Worms. You will be burnt alive, and your body reduced to ashes, as they did with John Huss." To this Luther replied: "Though they should enkindle a fire, whose flames should reach from Worms to Wittenberg, and rise

117 Royce: Studies in Good and Evil. Meister Eckhart.
118 Morris, p. 53.

up to heaven, I would go through it in the name of the Lord, and stand before them. I would enter the jaws of the behemoth, break his teeth, and confess the Lord Jesus Christ."[119]

V. SUMMARY.

By heredity, temperament, environment, and education, Luther was destined to develop a mystical element in his nature. This element is seen in his views of nature, his life experiences, and his formal theological teachings.

Luther's mysticism did not lead him into extremes, in fact he had difficulties with the fanatics and extreme mystics. He did not exalt feeling at the expense of the reason and the will. His active life is an evidence that his mysticism did not lead him into inactive contemplation, rather, was it an impelling force in his life.

Armstrong writes: "Mysticism is a subordinate trait in his character, if not as some would have it the mainspring of his religious experience. The movement, also, which Luther heads, in spite of its divergence from the ancient forms, is aglow with fervor, pulsating under the influence of a deep spiritual life."[120]

119 Ibid.
120 Armstrong: Transitional Eras in Thought, p. 61.

A Psychological Study of Lutheranism

CHAPTER III

A PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY OF LUTHERANISM

THE development of a Lutheran consciousness has been the message of Lutheran writers and speakers. The problem can be viewed theologically and psychologically. Heretofore the emphasis has been placed upon the former viewpoint with little or no attention to the latter. "Consciousness" is a pyschological term, and the term "Lutheran consciousness" is descriptive of the Lutheran content of mind.

There is not only the doctrinal basis and defense of a denominational consciousness but also the psychological basis. The doctrinal viewpoint maintains the necessity and the right of such a consciousness in the light of a higher doctrinal authority; the psychological viewpoint would be descriptive of this consciousness and would seek a partial, if not a total, explanation upon natural grounds.

Lutheran theologians would not go the length to which Professor McComas goes in his conclusions in his book on "The Psychology of Religious

LUTHERAN SEMINARY LIBRARY, MAYWOOD, ILL.

Sects:" "Never has there been a sect made by God," and "Every group of worshippers has been drawn together by influences which may be explained naturally." However, there is a legitimate field for the investigation of the psychological factors in our denominationalism.

"A psychological interpretation of the different Christian sects," writes Professor Ames, "requires that they be regarded as social organisms whose life history is much fuller and richer than can be measured by their intellectual doctrines. They are products and results of social movements, as well as means of control and guidance. Each denomination represents a type of personality, a social stratification, which is determined in its original pattern by the economic forces and the personal leadership which fashioned it. Afterwards it aggregates likeminded people to itself and stamps its members with its own marks. All Protestant bodies have common characteristics, within which there are differentiations and lesser organic growths of great variety."[1]

Lutheranism finds its beginning in the Protestant revolt of the sixteenth century. Its immediate cause was the sale of indulgences. Luther discovered this traffic while hearing penitents in the confessional. He immediately made an attack upon this practice, giving expression to his views in his "Ninety-Five Theses" which he nailed to the Castle Church door in Wittenberg, Oct. 31st, 1517. Back

1 Ames: "The Psychology of Religious Experience," p. 380.

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of this act and all the early acts in Luther's reformatory work was the man Luther with all his religious struggles, his convent life, his journey to Rome with its lasting impressions, and many other experiences. All his experiences went to make up a Protestant type of mind which under favorable circumstances and in line with other contributory forces led the way for the Reformation of the sixteenth century.

In his "History of European Morals," Lecky suggests a characterization of the Catholic and Protestant types of mind in these words: "In the great convulsions of the sixteenth century the feminine type followed Catholicism, while Protestantism inclined more to the masculine type. Catholicism retained Virgin worship, which at once reflected and sustained the first. The skill by which it acts upon the emotions by music, and painting, and solemn architecture, and imposing pageantry, its tendency to appeal to the imagination rather than to reason, and to foster modes of feeling rather than modes of thought, its assertion of absolute and infallible certainty, above all the manner in which it teaches its votary to throw himself perpetually on authority all tended in the same direction."[2]

President Cutten holds that the distinction between Catholicism and Protestantism "chiefly center about differences of authority and emphasis.

2 Quoted by Cutten: "The Psychological Phenomena of Christianity," p. 461.

The organization or its representatives is the authority in the Roman Catholic Church, and its emphasis is laid upon death rather than upon life. Among Protestants authority is found in reason, conscience or the Bible, or in a combination of any or all of these with the Church organization."[3]

Again, Protestantism is analyzed by Professor Ames in these words: "Protestantism itself represents the disintegration of the mediaeval social unity and the assertion of national and community, as well as personal, individualism. The Protestant type is therefore marked by initiative, aggression, and loyalty to personal leaders. Its parties are given to emphasis upon special reforms and to the elaboration of single principles, or half truths. Its name describes its spirit of revolt and dissent."[4]

Protestantism is, therefore, a type of mind essentially opposed to authority; it is dominated by the spirit of protest and revolt; it is largely masculine and aggressive rather than feminine; and it is given over to a strong individualism, and devotion and loyalty to personal leaders, self-chosen.

As the origin of a religious denomination is a good index to its spirit and character, so too, the characteristics and the temperament of the leader and founder of an organization are an index to its character. Lutheranism is to a great extent the working out in a large group of the spirit and characteristics of Luther, its founder. Professor Ames

3 Cutten: Ibid, p. 461.
4 Ames: Ibid, p. 380.

holds that "Calvinism, even more than Lutheranism, is an expression of the mental traits of its founder." Nevertheless, the mental traits of Luther have entered largely into Lutheranism.

I shall turn to several writers in the field of the psychology of religion for interpretations of Luther, the leader of the Protestant revolt.

Professor Leuba writes: "Luther and St. Augustine were too profoundly religious to fall into the errors of intellectualism. . . . . In the following comment on the first commandment in the *Longer Catechism* Luther carries one's thought forward to Feuerbach's radical belief that the gods are the children of men's thirst for happiness. 'What is it to have God, or what is God? A God denotes that something by means of which men shall be aware of all good things and wherein he shall have a refuge in every necessity.' "[5]

President Cutten holds that Luther had fundamentally a Protestant type of mind: "With similar heredity and environment we find vastly different minds. Luther is a pertinent example of this. His parentage was Roman Catholic, his training was Roman Catholic even to that of the cloister, and yet psychologically Luther was not a Roman Catholic. From the fact that many were found at the same time with similar tendencies, we might consider the psychological change from authority to rationalism to be the evolution of the race."[6]

5 Leuba: "A Psychological Study of Religion," p. 460.
6 Cutten: Ibid.

In his work, "The Interpretation of Religious Experience," Professor Watson points out that "the supremacy of the human conscience" was one of the leading principles held by Luther. He shows that Luther took a large and liberal view of the Scriptures, holding some portions superior to others. Luther also set aside the traditions of the Church for what he considered the fundamental truth, accepting the essential and discarding the non-essential.[7]

Dealing more specifically with Luther's character, Professor Ames writes: "Luther was the incarnation of the free Teutonic spirit, with its independence, spontaniety, and moral earnestness. The people for whom he was spokesman were overburdened by papal taxation to aid in building St. Peter's at Rome and to maintain there an extravagant and luxurious court. Luther's visit to Italy prepared him to realize to the full the immorality of the sale of indulgences in his own province. This vicious development of the practice of meritorious 'works,' aggravated by the effrontery of the papal agents and supported by the superstitious credulity in his countrymen, produced a profound revulsion in Luther's moral nature. It found expression in the text, 'The just shall live by faith.' "[8]

In reference to Luther's mystical strain, Hocking writes: "In Luther's appeal to grace, rather than works, his reliance on the forgiveness of sins;

7 Watson: "The Interpretation of Religious Experience," Vol. I, p. 151.
8 Ames: Ibid, p. 382.

in the self-abandonment of conversion; and in many another assertion of the 'feeling of absolute dependence;' we see other forms of this same principle of passivity which complete the preparation of the mystic."[9]

Lutheranism inherits from its founder a desire for deep personal religion, an antagonism to reason as opposed to revealed truth, opposition to human authority in matters of faith and religion, a high regard for the conscience of man, and a deep mystical strain in religious life and activity.

Justification by faith, as the central doctrine of Lutheranism, is directly traceable to the religious experience of Luther. Failing to find satisfaction for his spiritual longings in the meritorious works in and out of convent life, he found that satisfaction in Paul's teaching "the just shall live by faith." This profoundest of all of Luther's discoveries in his spiritual struggles has become the cornerstone of Lutheranism and in fact of Protestant theology in general.

Lutheranism was transplanted from the Old World to the New World by the many immigrants who came from Germany and other northern European countries.

Taking up this historical viewpoint, Professor McComas writes: "A number of denominations in this country trace their history back to the people immediately affected by Luther's influence. Their

9 Hocking: "The Meaning of God in Human Experience," p. 383.

lineage is not only doctrinal but human. For the very people who responded to Luther were the ancestors of many who stoutly defend his name today. The Lutheran is the greatest Protestant Church in the world today. The Lutheran Church in America would be one of the largest, if it were not divided into twenty-four divisions. Nevertheless, through these divisions one may see certain characteristics in common. The first is that all of these separate bodies look back to the Augsburg Confession as the constitution of their faith. Some of them accept in addition Luther's Catechism, or the Smalkald Articles; or perhaps the Apostolic, the Nicene, or the Athanasian Creeds. Their central doctrine is salvation through faith in Christ, and their theology turns upon that. They are a people who retain the doctrinal tenets of the past, but have also a religious experience which runs parallel with their doctrines. They are neither as doctrinal as the Presbyterians, nor as insistent upon experience as the Methodist; but doctrines and devotion of a characteristic kind run through them all, despite national differences."[10]

Elsewhere, the same author adds these characteristics of the Lutheran Church in America: "The Lutherans, with twenty-four bodies, are alike in holding to doctrine as pre-eminent. Justification before God by means of faith is the central conviction. 'Faith' is not merely a matter of intellectual assent but also an emotional matter in

10 McComas: "The Psychology of Religious Sects," p. 78.

that the believer accepts Christ in a personal way. Their Church history is full of theological battles. The understanding of doctrines has been of first importance. Education is encouraged, and the education of the youth in the doctrines of the Church is a prominent part of the Church work; for the child is brought up to pass from the Sunday School to the Church as a natural process,—no radical experience being expected..... The type is in the nature of the literal which makes for a dogmatic adherence to established doctrines and the emotional life is around these conceptions."[11]

The divisions of Lutheranism in this country are explained and accounted for upon several grounds. First of all, is the great diversity of languages of the Churches which bear the name of Luther. Every country of northern Europe was affected by the Protestant Reformation and there arose in each country a Church with the Augsburg Confession as its symbol. By immigration these Churches have been transplanted to America, and the Church remains divided on account of language, racial, and national differences. The United Synod in the South owes its origin to the Civil War struggle and the division of the country upon the question of slavery, the right of secession, and other social and political questions. The General Council, although its existence is due to a parliamentary ruling, owes its origin to the fear on the part of some Lutheran leaders that the Church in this

11 McComas: Ibid, p. 195.

country was departing from the faith of the fathers, and the new general body was a movement to return to the faith, the customs, and the traditions of the earlier Church, especially of the Reformation period.

Discussing the early history of the Lutheran Church in this country, McComas writes: "Nothing was more natural than the drifting apart of the different national stocks in the growth of the great Lutheran Church, though the splendid work of Muhlenberg shows the possibilities of resisting such a natural drift. In the beginning of the eighteenth century there were a number of congregations of Dutch, Swedish, and German Lutherans scattered through New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. Each was jealous of its rights and privileges and tenacious of its independence. Muhlenberg succeeded in working these various, dissimilar Churches into one great organization, despite the great obstacles of language, separate interests, race prejudices and separation by great distances. As years went on, the various Churches used English more and more, their interests became identified, the older forms of thought and custom which were identical with their foreign homes became more uniform and took the character of their new environment. A great American Church was the outcome. Unfortunately, issues arose which later resulted in secessions. Nevertheless, the heroic work of the men who brought the struggling colonial Churches into one great

brotherhood stands as a precedent and an inspiration, and presents the great issue of church unity squarely before the twenty-four bodies of the Lutheran Church today."[12]

In our search for the typical Lutheran we shall make use of the plan followed by Dr. Jean du Buy, in his study of "Four Types of Protestants," in which he suggests thirty topics for the comparison of the types he has under investigation.[13] We shall add such other characteristics as occur to us as distinctive of the Lutheran type.

The typical Lutheran is dominated by the thought that the Bible is the supreme and infallible rule of faith and practice, and that the Augsburg Confession is a correct exhibition of the fundamental teachings of the Bible. The Lutheran finds his code of ethics in the Bible. He has a profound conviction of the existence of sin and that it is a great curse to be blotted out only through the love of God in Jesus Christ. The Lutheran sees in God a great loving personality in whom He should place his trust and confidence. Lutheran preaching centers about the sacrifice of Christ, for Lutheran theology is Christo-centric, and every sermon is based upon this fundamental principle. Church membership in the Lutheran Church is all inclusive—the child in the Christian home is a member of the Church, although at a proper age the child is expected to make his own confession.

12 McComas: Ibid, p. 64.
13 American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education, Vol. III, No. 2. Nov., 1908, p. 165.

The Lutheran distinguishes clearly between the functions of the State and the Church. He delegates to the State a certain work and to the Church another. The Lutheran is usually a person of average education as the Church has always emphasized the importance of education, secular and religious. The Church has manifested considerable constructive efforts and organizing power. It is committed strongly to definite doctrines and is dogmatic in its positions. It stands for religious liberty, but not for liberalism in its ranks. It finds its authority in the Bible rather than in human institutions or human creatures. It stands for civil liberty and was a forerunner in this principle. It has been actively engaged in missionary and philanthropic enterprises.

The membership of the Church and the typical Lutheran is not highly emotional and the Church discourages extreme emotionalism. The emotion of a Lutheran centers in his doctrines. The Church has been characterized at times by waves of pietism, and piety is a mark of a Lutheran, with this piety often centering in the home and the family circle. The typical Lutheran is not necessarily of a certain social class, he may be found in various social groups, although it is generally true that he is of the middle, or average social and economic group. The Church has laid emphasis upon all forms of education. It is not especially antagonistic to science, but has greater interest in the revelations of God as found in the Bible than in the discoveries

of man. It emphasizes infant baptism, and the religious education of children. It preaches temperance in all things, but sees intemperance in the abuse rather than in the use of any creation of God. However, it is generally conceded that the Church is opposed to the saloon. This is especially true of the Americanized portion of the Church. It finds its growth dependent upon immigration and the natural increase of the Lutheran population. The Church is largely conservative in all its endeavors. The Church is liturgical and great stress is placed upon music and upon congregational singing and worship. It is anti-legalistic and allows a great amount of freedom to the individual in the choice of his amusements and pleasures. The Church has always insisted upon a highly trained ministry and the laity are noted for their knowledge of the Bible and of theological questions. The typical Lutheran is a theologian.

Little confidence is now placed in the attempt to classify individuals according to temperament. Upon this theory individuals were thought to be especially adapted to certain denominations. Modern psychology teaches that the "self" is a product of contact with "others." Thus an individual takes on the characteristics of his group. The type of his consciousness is not a native endowment but a product of his relations with others. This theory does away with the old view of the existence of a peculiar type of people who are by nature "Lutheran material," while others are of such type of conscious-

ness as to make them unsusceptible to the Lutheran appeal. The modern view, of course, admits the fact that adults are of a more or less fixed type of consciousness and are less impressionable than youth. On the other hand, it lends encouragement to work among all types of children and young people.

Lutheranism, with its conservative tendency, its non-fraternizing spirit has not come under the sway of many of the "leveling forces" which have entered into the development of many other denominations. It is true that many Lutheran children have come under the influence of the public school, but many others have not come in touch with this great force because they have attended Lutheran parochial schools. The interdenominational young people's societies which have done much to break down denominational barriers have not penetrated far into Lutheranism for the Church soon instituted its own young people's work with a view of conserving the Lutheran ideals. Even, the various general bodies have inaugurated their own distinctive young people's work apart from that of other branches of the Lutheran communion.

In the forward look toward church union Lutheranism faces the task of banding together its own divisions before a further step can be taken. It must overcome differences of polity, doctrine, and national and racial distinctions.

"The various denominations," writes Professor Ames, "possess genuine social consciousness. That

is their strength. But that consciousness is too much restricted both in outlook and in methods. What is now demanded by the spirit of the age is that they shall overcome their partial and limited historical functions and participate more fully and with scientific awareness and efficiency in the highest ideals of the whole race."[14]

Is Lutheranism of God or of man? Of both. It is the province of the Lutheran theologian to determine the divine and human elements in our denominational consciousness. It is the work of the Lutheran pastor to emphasize the former while making only secondary use of the latter.

14 Ames: Ibid, p. 395.

The Psychology of the Religious Revival

CHAPTER IV

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE RELIGIOUS REVIVAL[1]

THE psychology of the religious revival involves both the psychology of the crowd and the psychology of leadership. The religious revival is essentially a "psychological crowd and is a form of impulsive action." The fact that the revival is concerned with religious ideals and spiritual values does not dfferentiate it, from the viewpoint of psychology, from any other crowd no matter what the dominating ideals of the crowd may be. The revivalist combines both the public speaker and the 'leader.' He is concerned with stirring the crowd to action. This latter statement is readily substantiated when one learns that leading revivalists have made a study of crowd psychology with a view of improving their efforts in moving men to action.

The revival as a psychological crowd is marked by a mental unity or a "sympathetic likemindedness." The meetings have been planned, fostered,

1 This chapter is introduced for the purpose of contrasting the revival as a method in religious work with the method more generally accepted among Lutherans, which is dealt with in the next chapter.

and are conducted by people of like beliefs, sympathies, and interests. There is a oneness in ideals and purposes. The workers aim at bringing into the fold those who are without, and seek to influence individuals to accept their religious ideals and views; they long for the salvation of others as they themselves have been saved. This mental unity breeds a mental contagion. Those who are indifferent to the ideals presented in the revival soon become sympathetic, and gradually accept the attitude of the majority and share in the oneness of the crowd mind.

Contributing to this mental unity are the common religious ideas held by the mass. They have a common conception of sin, a common view of God, or redemption and salvation. For the most part there is a common faith in the methods being used and a faith in the power of him who is in charge of the revival. This community of ideas is enhanced in certain localities by the fact that this method has been used 'from all time;' it is the approved method; it has been characterized by success on previous occasions and the fruits of its presence have been seen in the community. At times it has been urged upon the minds of the people as the historical method—the method of the fathers—in spite of the fact that the religious revival as we know it dates from about 1734, although there have been religious mass movements throughout the history of the Christian Era, and previous to it.

The mental unity of the audience in the revival

is prepared by advance advertising, announcements and other means used to awaken interest in the effort. The reading and hearing of the same thing about the revival to come, and the revivalist, tends to produce a common opinion and a common viewpoint, which cements the community together. A publicity agent precedes the revivalist heralding his past success, the number of converts, the amount of money raised, and the intense interest manifested in his work. Before his arrival in a new community he has the crowd with him. They are one as to their opinion of his ability and the possible outcome of his work in their community.

This suggests the element of expectancy and of strained attention which plays such an important part in the psychology of the crowd. The hope of seeing results expressed by the entire crowd increases the oneness of the body and prepares it to receive messages in the same unity of mind, with little reflection or individual thought.

The strained attention brings about an arrest of thought which makes the individual as a member of this psychological crowd less rational than he would be when passing judgment upon any matter when free from his crowd. In a revival gathering the reason of the individual is held in abeyance and he is no longer himself but one part of a larger whole. His opinions, thoughts, impulses, are largely determined by the attitude of the crowd or imposed by the leader of the meeting.

The absence of reason exalts feeling, and emo-

tion is therefore more characteristic of the religious revival than reason. "Emotional pressure is exerted at the expense of rational insight." The extent to which feeling enters into the revival is generally known. Excitement is one of its chief characteristics. We can not describe a religious revival as a body in which there is a unity of rationality so much as one in which there is a feeling in common.

These mental traits which we have mentioned leave the individual mind in the group in a highly suggestible state. The oneness of mind in the group has produced a oneness in action and thus the individual mind is prepared to accept and put into action suggestions that might come from the leader or others in the revival. This leads to 'conversions' which are due to social pressure rather than rational decision. A young man once confessed to me that his conversion experience was such as indicated that it was due to suggestion and social pressure rather than rational choice. His words were: "I went through that once, but it seems to me I was in sort of a trance; that's what I felt when it was over."

Suggestion plays a part not only in the attitude of the individual but also in the group as a whole. The revival audience will act as a unit upon suggestions from the revivalist. This is enhanced by many calls for united action.

The imitative instinct is in full play in a psychological crowd. There are conversions which have been traced to imitation as the motive and

force. It leads individuals to take the same steps that others have taken, to follow the same plan others have followed in coming into harmony with the ideals of the revival.

Revivalists know the power and value of suggestion and make constant use of it in their efforts. The use often drifts into abuse. At a recent meeting of revivalists at Moody Institute, Chicago, the following criticism was passed upon such abuse by the Rev. Dr. Frederick E. Taylor, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.: "I have sat on pulpits and counted when evangelists have named the number of persons asking for prayer. 'There's one, and another, and another, and yet another,' cried the evangelist, and he kept right on counting. All I could see were two hands in the whole room."

That imitation plays an important part in the revival is seen from evidence coming from an organization sympathetic with the revival methods. A national gathering of this body of religious workers recently decried the use of "decoy converts" in revivals, branding it as a method unbecoming the sanction of those dominated by proper ideals of religious work.

That objective forces, social pressure, example, and imitation have a large share in religious revivals is seen from these tables adapted from Dr. Starbuck's investigations,[2] which suggest that these

2 Starbuck: The Psychology of Religion, p. 54.

forces are a greater factor in revival than in non-revival cases of conversion:

I. Motives and forces present at conversion.

	Revival	Non-revival
Example and imitation..	15	11
Social pressure	23	14
Objective forces	60	56

II. In what conversion consists.

	Revival	Non-revival
Self-surrender	14	11
Forgiveness	21	11
Public confession	19	11

Other factors of an objective character enter into both the mental unity of the audience and the play of suggestion which have not been mentioned thus far. One such factor is compactness of sitting in an audience. This plays a part in the religious revival. The crowding together of people, and the limiting of voluntary movements, tends to promote the mental unity and to make the crowd of a more suggestible character. Again, the order of service, involving congregational singing, the rising and sitting down of the audience, has the same unifying effect. The music of the revival meeting is usually of such a character as to aid in this. It occasionally has a martial 'swing,' or more frequently a rhythm which appeals to that which is instinctive in man. The applause of the non-religious gathering which has this unifying effect is supplanted in

the revival by the interjection of 'Amen' and the shouting of words and phrases indicating approval and acquiescence.

The element of time also enters into the process. The revival effort is seldom, if ever, a one-night or one-meeting affair. It is usually protracted. The effect of gathering night after night for periods of two or three or more weeks intensifies the unity of the group. This implies repetition of the same message night after night which eventually will influence the minds of many.

While this chapter aims chiefly to deal with the revival audience, yet the study of the psychology of the revival would be incomplete without some mention of the revivalist and his share in the effort. Invariably, the revivalist is one who has had an experience similar to that which he desires to see in the lives of others. He thus speaks as one with authority. He has experienced the power of that which he is proclaiming. Not infrequently he makes a strong case from the fact that he was chiefest of sinners, and now holds a position of worth. Thus he establishes himself before his hearers as one with power. He has the sense of confidence in his message and in his ability to apply that message to the hearts of men. Occasionally the revivalist is heralded as strongly as the revival itself. His previous success is published and the prospects of the new work are indicated. The true revivalist must be master of the situation, having absolute control of every detail in the working

out of his plan. The work of such men as Moody, Chapman and others testify to the statesmanlike character of some revivalists.

There are some abnormal effects of the revival in response to suggestion. These effects are both physical and psychical. Suggestion advances to hypnotism. Many revivalists use the method of the hypnotist in suggesting actions on the part of the individual. Many cases of hypnotism result from revivals. Individuals are led to do many things not from choice but from pressure from others. Here also might be mentioned cases of hallucinations which are upon record, and visions, and of hearing of voices. From reports which I have been able to gather and from observation, all these phenomena have occurred in connection with revivals. A display of them was in connection with the revivalistic work of a Mrs. Maria Beulah Woodworth. She has written an autobiography entitled: "The Life, Work and Experience of Maria Beulah Woodworth." I take from her book three extracts which bear out the statement that trance states are induced through the hypnotic influence of the revivalist.

"One night during the meeting a young lady went into a trance; they sent word to her father that she wanted to see him. When told about it he swore he would tear up the M——— Church and show them that they should not make his daughter insane, but when he came into the church the spirit of God got hold of him, and in fifteen minutes he

was praising God for saving a poor sinner like him." (Page 195.)

"A young sister, one of the converts, went home with them (Brother Mason and wife) to stay all night. She went to bed praying for them, and fell into a trance, and they, thinking something was the matter, got up and found her lying with her hands pointing to heaven. She was preaching and praising God. She was so cold and stiff as if she was dead. They tried to bend her hands and lay them down, but they were so stiff it raised her head off the pillow." (Page 164.)

She relates the following case of healing: "Souls were saved and bodies healed. Many of the old people said they never saw the power of God manifested in such a wonderful manner. They thanked God that they were permitted to see the Lord heal the sick and back up his words with signs and wonders. A man from Washington, D. C., came to the meeting and was wonderfully healed. He had been afflicted for over twenty-five years with asthma, bronchitis, heart failure, and lung trouble." (Page 373.)

To these phenomena may be added cases of hysteria, fainting and catalepsy. The latter I believe is indicated in the second case cited from the work of Mrs. Woodworth.

The separate phenomena of the religious revival have been interpreted in different ways. These may be reduced to three general theories. The first is that of the supernatural—all revival and conver-

sion phenomena are manifestations of the Infinite, a supernatural event in each case. This was discarded for the pathological theory, in which all these special phenomena have been explained upon the basis that all were symptoms of disease. The more recent explanation is that based upon psychology. These phenomena for the most part are traceable to the workings of the laws of mind, and consciousness. To accept the latter does not eliminate the supernatural. The psychological explanation has taken out a few of the factors and explained them in relation to the psychic process.

The criticism of Professor E. A. Ross, of the crowd in general, can be applied with equal force to the revival. The crowd is essentially unstable. We do not know where to count on it. It can be swayed one way and then another. For definite effort and sane movement it is uncertain. It is credulous and irrational. The individual critical mind is lost in the "throng sense." It is ready to receive and act upon almost any suggestion without due reflection, or weighing of the evidence, or counting the cost. It is essentially characterized by simplicity—a simplicity that unfits it for serious action and endeavor. Finally, he writes, it lacks virtue, it is immoral. Surely that which is unstable, credulous, irrational, simple, is not morally capable of dealing with the deep issues of life.

"The most glaring danger is found in the emotionalism and excitement of religious revivals," writes Professor Starbuck. "The effect is to induce

a state of mere feeling which, when it has passed, leaves no spiritual residuum; to drive persons to irrational conduct, so that when the reaction sets in, they reject not only their first profession, but the whole of religion."

The study of the religious revival from the viewpoint of psychology would indicate that it has many, if not all, the characteristics of the psychological crowd. It can be studied and analyzed from this point of view, which study will be suggestive for the improving of religious methods and work. To criticise the faults of the revival is in no way disparaging to religion nor to the individual experience of conversion. It is hopeful in that it will lead to a search for sane and rational methods. Davenport writes: "Both conversion and religion are in themselves normal and healthful and sane. .... The comforting and tranquilizing influence of undefiled religion upon society is too evident to require argument or even comment. But religion and religious methods worthy of the name will neither weaken the will nor enfeeble the rational powers."

The Psychology of Confirmation

CHAPTER V

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CONFIRMATION

THE rite of confirmation by which youths are received into full membership of the Church has been practiced with more or less regularity and uniformity throughout the history of the Lutheran Church. The Church of the Reformation, in following this plan of perpetuating itself, adopted a method that was in vogue in the Catholic Church and the present system is taken in large measure from the practice of the Universal Church previous to the Protestant Reformation.

The various studies made of confirmation have emphasized the Scriptural, the historical and the liturgical viewpoints. From the Scriptural standpoint it has been attempted to trace the origin of the practice of the rite of confirmation to Biblical sources, thus giving it the sanction of the authority of the Bible. However, Dr. Gerberding writes: "Many Lutheran writers on Catechetics have professed to find a formal and complete catechumenate in the New Testament Church. With them the wish

is father to the thought, and the thought molds or invents the facts to suit. Nothing is gained by such procedure. A formal catechumenate did not exist in the New Testament Church. There is no trace of a regular, systematized course of instruction, to organized classes or to individuals previous to reception into the congregation by baptism."[1]

The historical viewpoint has engaged itself in tracing the development of the rite through the history of the Church, showing what different methods have been followed in the Catholic Church before and since the Reformation, and also among the Protestant forces.

The liturgical studies have devoted time and energy to the determination of the attending practices of the rite, the ritual, and the actual act of confirming rather than the study of the work of the catechumenate in the preparation of young people for reception into full membership of the Church.

In all these studies the more fundamental aspect has been neglected,—the basis for the rite of confirmation in the very nature of youth itself, and the related psychological and pedagogical problems.

Recent investigations in anthropology, sociology, and psychology reveal the fact that confirmation can find its justification in deep seated facts of the constitution of human nature itself.

First of all, it has been learned that certain

1 Gerberding: The Lutheran Catechist, p. 45.

rites similar in many respects to the rite of confirmation exist almost universally among the tribes and nations of the earth. There seems to be a universal custom that the young of all peoples are initiated into higher responsibilities and obligations at the adolescent age—the age which correlates with the age of confirmation in the practices of Christendom.

Exhaustive studies of these tribal practices have been made by several students, chief among them, Dr. G. Stanley Hall. The results of these studies appear in his two volumes on *Adolescence.* Typical of these practices among primitive peoples we select the following from Dr. Hall's work to illustrate our point:

"The Omaha child was initiated into the tribe at three, but its individual life did not begin till its mind had 'become white,' or till events are recalled with clearness and full detail. This comes at about the age of puberty, when the youth is 'inducted into religious mysteries by a distinct personal experience acquired by the rite, Non-zhin-zhon, which brought them into what was believed to be direct communication with the supernatural powers. In preparation for this rite, the Omaha youth was taught the tribal prayer. He was to sing it during the four nights and days of his vigil in some lonely place. As he left his home his parents put clay on his head, and to teach him self-control they placed a bow and arrow in his hand, with the injunction not to use them during his long fast, no matter how

great the temptation might be. He was bidden to weep as he sung the prayer and to wipe his tears with the palms of his hands, to lift his wet hands to heaven, and then lay them on the earth. With these instructions, the youth departed to enter upon the trial of his endurance. When at last he fell into a sleep or trance and the vision came of bird or beast or cloud, bringing with it a cadence, this song became ever after the medium of communication between man and the mysterious power typified in his vision, and by it he summoned help and strength in the hour of his need.' The words of the prayer are addressed to Wa-Kon-da, the power that makes and brings to pass and is: 'Here, needy, he stands, and I am he.' It is far older than the advent of Columbus. It is a cry voicing the climacteric desire of the youth in his weary fast and vigil, as after long preparations he faces nature and the supernatural above. The melody is so soulful and appealingly prayerful that one can scarcely believe it to be of barbarous origin, yet what miracles may not religious feeling work. The boy is waiting, in fact, for a vision from on high, a revelation to be vouchsafed to him personally, and to show what his life is to be, whether that of a hunter, or of a warrior or medicine man, etc."[2]

In addition to the evidence that comes from anthropological studies, modern psychological investigations show clearly that adolescence is the period of the "birth of the larger self." It is the

2 Hall: Adolescence, Vol. II, p. 234.

period of physical expansion, intellectual growth, and religious awakening. It is the age of 'conversion' whether we use the term in the narrow or broad sense.

While admitting that adolescent religious psychology is far from being complete, Professor Coe holds that three claims may be made for it. "In the first place, the analysis of cases has been sufficiently careful to establish results that are true at least for the particular cases examined. In the next place, these results have been brought into relation to the physical and mental traits that are characteristic of the period in general. Finally, the results have been brought into relation also with a large body of religious customs and rites in the Christian Churches and in other religions."[3]

The investigations of Professor E. D. Starbuck, Ph. D., resulted in showing the number of conversions which occur for the respective years of the groups he studied as follows:

Age ...	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Females	5	7	20	26	31	25	17	34	15	21	10	11	6	3	1	4	5
Males..	15	17	38	64	56	85	89	121	114	45	77	58	47	31	23	11	12

In the above tables are included 776 graduates of Drew Theological Seminary. In this group the largest number experienced a religious awakening at 16 years and the average age for the group was 16.4 years. In a group of 51 men Dr. Starbuck found the average age of conversion to be 15.7

3 Coe: Education in Religion and Morals, p. 247.

years. In a group of 86 women it was 13.8 years, and in a group of 75 boys it was 16.3 years, while in a group of 120 girls it was 13.7 years.

From his investigations Dr. Starbuck formulates the following law: "Among the females there are two tidal waves of religious awakening at about 13 and 16, followed by a less significant period at 18; while among the males the great wave is at about 16, preceded by a wavelet at 12 and followed by a surging up at 18 or 19."[4]

The studies of E. G. Lancaster show that of 598 cases studied, 518 showed strongly that the years from 12 to 25 were years of religious awakening and inclination. In a study of 110 cases of boys and girls, Lancaster found the average for boys to be 15.6 and for girls 14.6 years.

Dr. Luther H. Gulick found that the average age of religious awakening of 526 Y. M. C. A. officers was 16.5 years.

"Among 512 officers of Y. M. C. A.'s," writes Professor Coe, "the average age of the first deep religious impression appears to have been 13.7 years. Among 99 men who were studied with reference to all their periods of special interest, as many awakenings of the religious sense occurred at 12 and 13 as at sixteen and seventeen."[5]

Professor Coe[6] combined his own statistics and those of other investigators with the following re-

4 Starbuck: Psychology of Religion.
5 Coe: Education in Religion and Morals, p. 254.
6 Coe: The Spiritual Life, p. 45.

sult, showing the average age of conversion or decisive awakening of a group of 1,784 men:

	No. of Cases	Av. Age
Graduates of Drew Theol. Seminary.	776	16.4
Y. M. C. A. Officers	526	16.5
Starbuck's Conversion Cases	51	15.7
Starbuck's Cases of Spontaneous Awakening	75	16.3
Members of Rock River Conference	272	16.4
Professor Coe's Own Cases	84	15.4
Total	1,784	16.4

The evidence to the effect that the adolescent period is normally a period of religious awakening is so strong that Professor Athearn writes: "No child passes through the adolescent period without being converted to something. It is not a question for the Church to discuss as to whether the child will be converted. Nature will take care of that. It is a question of *to what will he be converted* which should concern the Church. He may seek to find fulness of life by choosing as his example some popular hero, some bandit or cowboy lionized in cheap literature, or he may seek to find the life abundant by accepting Christ as the Pilot of his life. The Church school which fails to present the Christian life in such vivid imagery that it begets a joyous response in young lives, has failed at the most critical point."[7]

7 Athearn: The Church School, p. 188.

My own investigation bears out the fact that the age of confirmation correlates with the age of religious awakening, and 'conversion' in the narrower meaning of the word. I found that the average age of confirmation was a little higher than the age of conversion and religious awakening as indicated in the statistics quoted above. In this connection it is well to remember that the age of confirmation may not be the age of religious awakening, and the 'awakening' is apt to have occurred previous to reception into Church membership. Professor Coe suggests that the Churches which practice the rite of confirmation are careful not to receive children at too early an age, and that this practice would account for the higher average than in the records of religious awakenings. The higher average age also is explained by the fact that the liturgical Churches which practice confirmation require an intellectual preparation for Church membership. This would tend to raise the average age.

For the purpose of this investigation I used the records of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, through the kindness of the pastor, The Rev. Dr. C. E. Haupt. His careful and thorough records lend themselves to such an investigation.

During the years 1891-1915 more than fifteen hundred persons were received into the membership of this Church, including adolescents who were received by the rite of confirmation and adults who were received by adult baptism and profession

of faith. My investigation covered 1,413 cases. I found that 485 were men and boys. The age at which the greatest number for any one age were received was 16 years. The average for all cases was 34.5 years, but this figure has very little significance. Using as the arbitrary limits of the adolescent period, ten and twenty-five years, I found that 361 cases of the group of men and boys were of the adolescent period and that the average age of confirmation for this period was 18.11 years.

Of the total number of cases 928 were girls and women, or nearly twice as many females as males for the same period of time. There is something significant about this fact but we shall not deal with it.

Of the 928, 626 were of the adolescent period. The average age of reception into membership for the females was 26.2 years, while that of the adolescent (10 to 25) females was 17.5, somewhat lower than that for the males. The greatest number for any one age was 16 years, the same as for the males.

The same facts can be well represented by this table:

Age ...	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Males..	4	17	44	78	56	37	26	24	18	18	10	16	15
Females	15	43	87	138	124	47	45	33	24	21	26	13	14
Total ..	19	60	131	216	180	84	71	57	42	39	36	29	29

This investigation which covers the records of only one pastor, (and observation would lead us to believe that they are typical), bears out the fact

that the age of confirmation compares with the age of adolescent awakening. Through such investigations we can gain scientific assurance of the value of that which practical wisdom has hitherto taught us.

While there is a correlation between the age of conversion and the age of confirmation there are differences in the types of experience. This difference of individual experience is due chiefly to early training and environment. Children who are taught to expect a 'conversion' experience are much more apt to have it than those not so taught. Emotional signs are generally lacking in the rite of confirmation, although occasionally the ceremony calls forth a marked emotional expression.

Studies made of conversion and religious awakening show the following to be some of the motives leading up to the experience: fear of God's wrath, death or Hell; also sorrow for sins known to have been committed. Motives for confirmation reflect very largely that which has been taught catechumens, and for the most part reveal a calm and deliberate choice and step.

In addition to pointing out that the adolescent age is the age of religious awakening, many students have gone further to seek the cause of the relationship between adolescence and religious awakening, tracing it largely to the sexual instinct and life. The relationship, however, is not necessarily causal.

The psychological characteristics of the adoles-

cent period with which confirmation is concerned have been studied extensively. We can only suggest them here. It is largely a period of self-assertion, when the youth passes from parental control to self-choice and social control. It is a time when sentiment and romanticism play a great part in life. The social consciousness grows upon the individual and this is a part of the whole awakening of the self. The latter part of the adolescent period is marked by reflectiveness, by original, constructive thinking and interest in the larger problems of life.

The adolescent period is often a time of "storm and stress" although not all experience this. Early training can often forestall this. It is a period of special temptations and special problems. It is the time of intellectual difficulties when doubt frequently arises in the mind of the youth. It is the time when the conscience is especially sensitive.

All these particular problems need especial and careful treatment. Above all there should be a sympathetic attitude toward the youthful inquirer for truth. Doubt has been too frequently handled by the catechist and pastor as the product of the Devil and a thing to be shunned and cast aside without proper treatment. The attitude of the modern pedagogue is to use doubt as the stepping stone to a greater grasp of truth.

The method of confirmation, which presupposes a course of instruction, implies a gradual development. This is the great virtue of the confirmation

method as followed by the liturgical Churches. Modern students place no special credit to the spontaneous awakening and 'conversion' in preference to the confirmation method. Gradual growth as implied in confirmation is the one method commended by the leading students of religious psychology and pedagogy.

Professor Ames writes: "All authorities agree that the normal religious development of adolescence is one of gradual growth." He also quotes Professor Starbuck as follows: "It is doubtless the ideal to be striven for that the development during adolescence should be so even and symmetrical that no crisis would be reached, that the capacity for spiritual assimilation should be constantly equal to the demands that are made on consciousness."[8]

To summarize the thought of this chapter:

(1) In practicing the rite of confirmation as the culmination of a period of catechetical instruction we are making use of a deep-seated fact of human nature—that the age of adolescence is a normal time of religious awakening.

(2) Modern psychology and pedagogy recognize the superiority of a method that bridges the adolescent period without violent experiences in the adjustment of the individual.

(3) There is need of greater knowledge and greater recognition on the part of catechists, pas-

8 Ames: Psychology of Religious Experience, pp. 236, 237.

tors, and religious teachers of the results of psychological and pedagogical science in our methods of teaching, and also in the determination of the curriculum for our catechumens.

(4) It is important that we stress the matter of making confirmation a time of personal decision and make the test of confirmation a personal conviction.

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